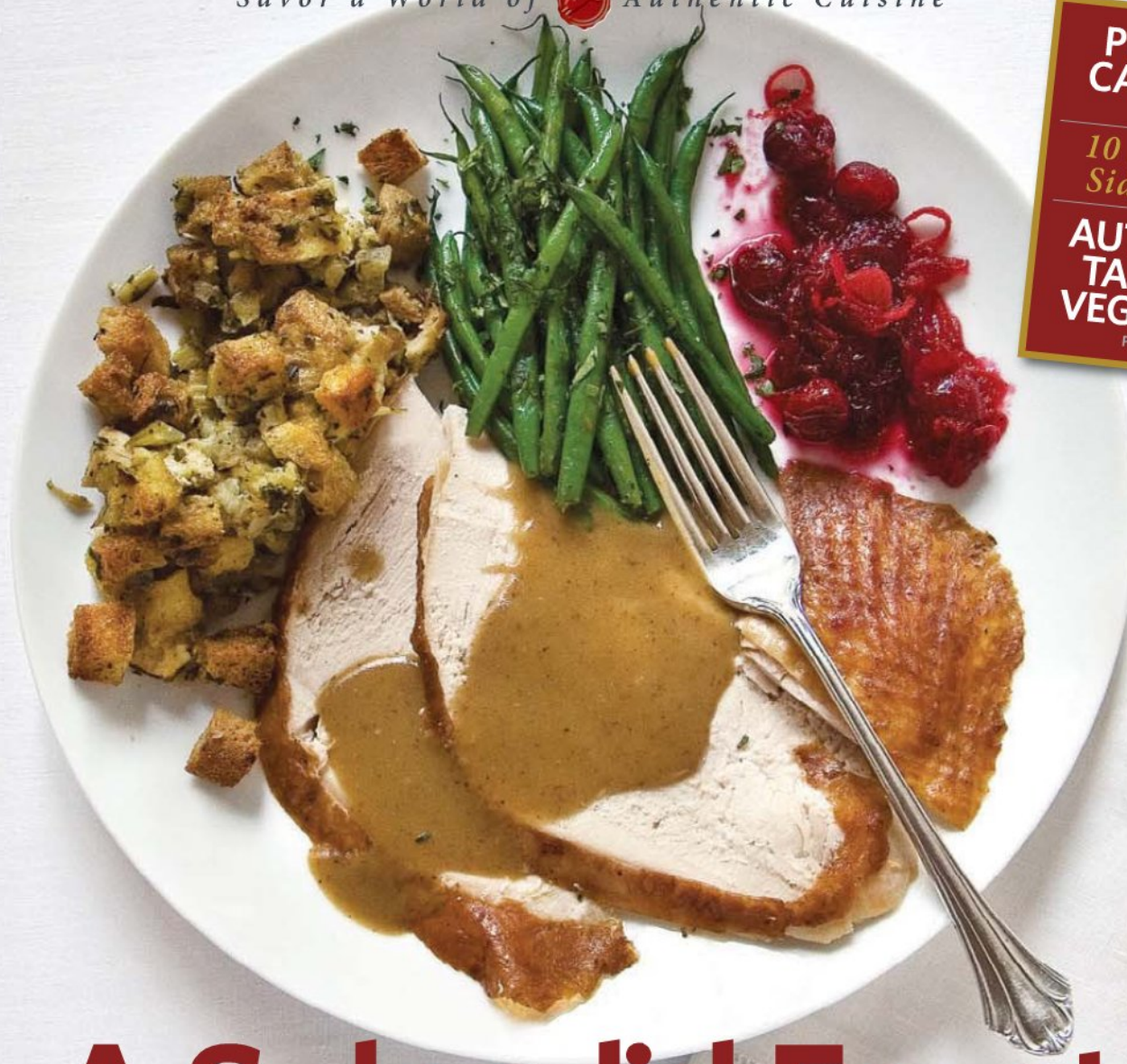


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CAKE ROLL**

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Side Dishes*

**AUTUMN'S
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PAGE 78

A Splendid Feast

The perfect holiday meal, from mouthwatering appetizers to spectacular desserts; plus superb stuffing, new ideas for gravy, and more

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SEMISWEET



SAVEUR



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COVER

Roast turkey and gravy with French green beans and cranberry sauce.

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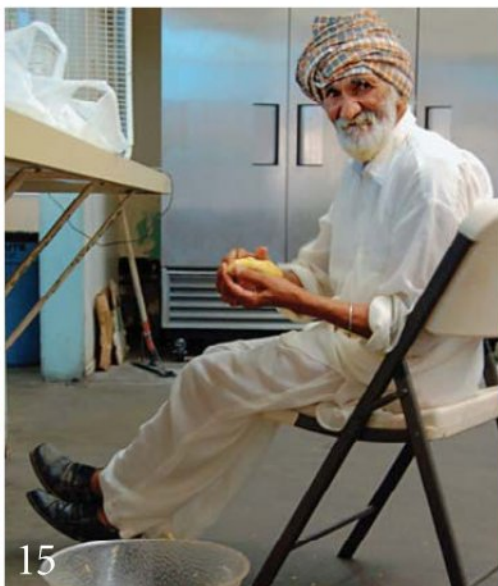
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A scenic view of a green pasture with several black and white cows grazing. In the background, there are rolling hills, a large body of water, and distant mountains under a clear sky. A yellow bush is in the foreground on the right.

A background image of weathered wooden planks. The text is overlaid on this background.

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FIRST

Great Beginnings

Sometimes it's the pre-feast treats that we remember the best

THERE ARE FEW THINGS we relish more than sitting down with friends and family at the Thanksgiving table, and in this issue we document a couple of memorable holiday meals, one in Minnesota, where the host and the producer of the public radio program *The Splendid Table* help cook a rollicking potluck feast (page 64), and another at a West Virginia home where the distance from farm to fork is measured in footsteps (page 44). But much as we enjoy the Thanksgiving repast itself, we're also fans of the appetizers and pre-meal rituals that heighten our anticipation of what's to come. For your delectation, the members of the editorial staff at *SAVEUR* share their favorites.

Lily Binns, managing editor: "My aunt Brigit always puts out an incredibly ambitious pre-dinner spread that has included armagnac-marinated bacon-wrapped prunes (a success), duck foie gras topped with gewürztraminer jelly (less so), and oyster-aquavit shooters (a surprise hit)." **Dana Bowen**, deputy editor: "My son loves canned, pitted black olives, which fit perfectly onto his two-year-old fingers, so I like to keep a bowl of them where he can reach it." **Katherine Cancila**, assistant editor: "I'm crazy about the store-bought—yes, store-bought—red pepper dip my stepmother serves with crudité." **Todd Coleman**, food editor: "I've been known to finish a whole plate of my mother-in-law's stuffed mushrooms—little up-turned mushroom caps filled with sausage, celery, onion, and chopped mushroom stems." **Georgia Freedman**, associate editor: "I always pluck a few pieces of skin and meat from the

cooling turkey before dinner, and no one is the wiser." **Beth Kracklauer**, senior editor: "My compulsively crafty mother goes totally harvest baroque with a mountainous centerpiece of fall fruits and nuts." **Paul Love**, assistant photography editor: "My aunt used to make mysteriously delicious meatballs that simmered in a chafing dish in some sort of hybrid pasta-barbecue sauce. It was the only thing you'd find

on my mini paper plate."

David McAninch, deputy editor: "I always coveted the olive- and twist-garnished cocktails I saw swirling in the grown-ups' glasses when I was a kid, so I invariably persuaded my mom to whip up a shirley temple using 7-Up, grenadine syrup, and however many maraschino cherries I desired." **Larry Nighswander**, photography editor: "As the self-appointed Thanksgiving executive chef, I like to make chopped chicken liver right after I put the



Deputy editor Dana Bowen's two-year-old son, Jackson, with a favorite pre-meal snack.

turkey in the oven." **James Oseland**, editor-in-chief: "I do my shopping on Thanksgiving morning in Manhattan's Chinatown, where I find amazing free-range chicken and some of the freshest vegetables in town. For appetizers, I always pick up dim sum from a restaurant on the Bowery. My guests flip for it." **Liz Pearson**, director, *SAVEUR* test kitchen: "My mother didn't prepare hors d'oeuvres, despite my protests, so I made sure to dip my finger into the gravy boat each time I walked through the kitchen." **Judith Sonntag**, copy chief: "Sherry: more than one glass." **David Weaver**, art director: "My mom's pecan tarts. If you're going to cheat a little before the meal, this is the way to go." 



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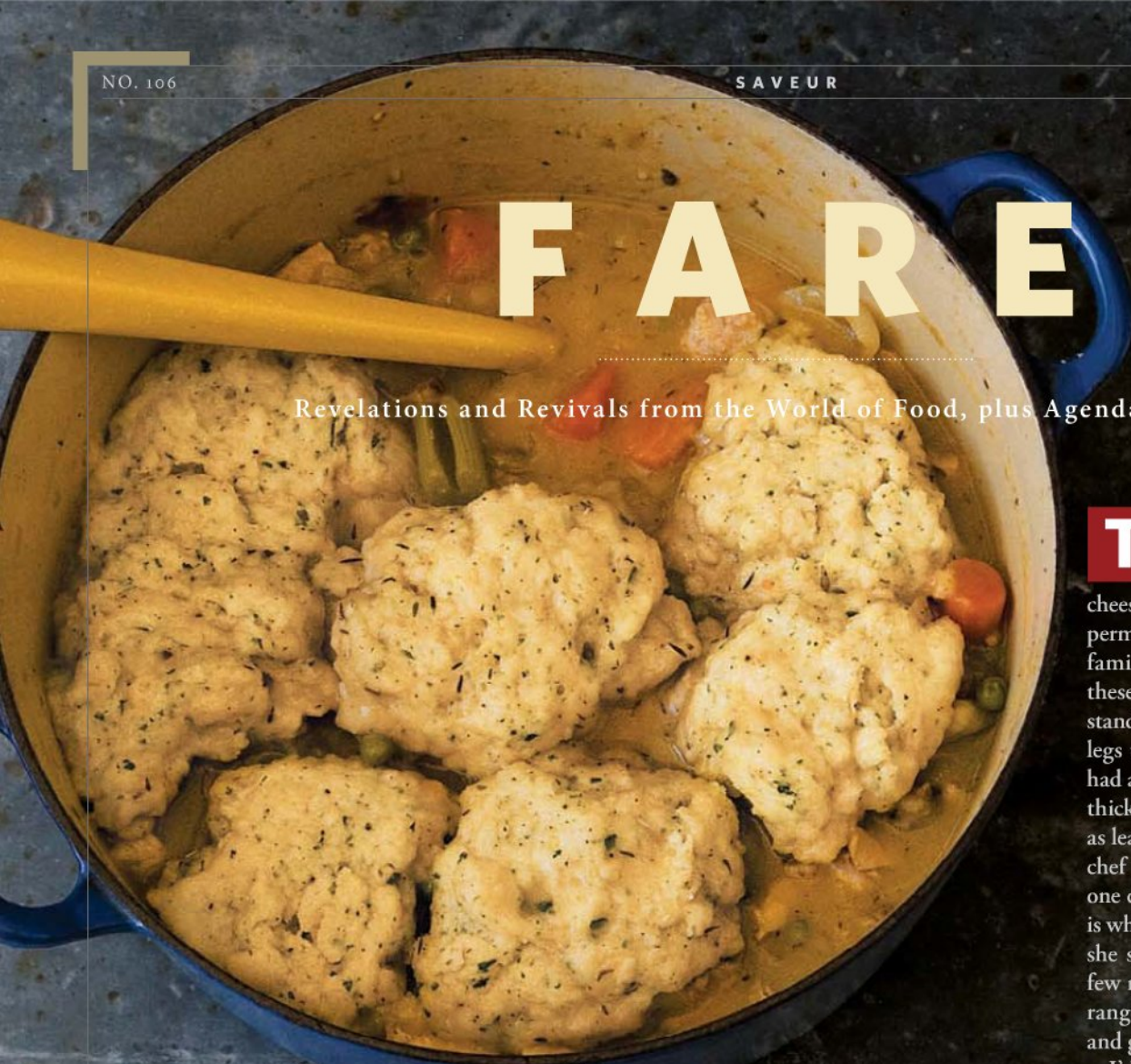
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FARE

Revelations and Revivals from the World of Food, plus Agenda and More

THE CHICKENS THAT emerged from the oven at the Inn at Celebrity Dairy, a B&B and goat cheese farm in Siler City, North Carolina, permeated the kitchen with the warmly familiar aroma of Sunday dinner, but these birds didn't look anything like your standard roasters. One had unusually long legs that poked out of the pan; another had a meaty breast that burst through its thick, burnished skin; and a third looked as lean as a long-distance runner. A local chef named Andrea Reusing carved each one carefully and stole a few bites. "This is what chicken is supposed to taste like," she said, with a wide grin. Sneaking a few morsels myself, I was amazed at the range of flavors and textures, from rich and gamy to satiny and succulent.

I'd made the trip to this old farming community in central North Carolina to take part in what surely constitutes a rarity in the world of gastronomy: a chicken tasting. Specifically, it was a tasting of three vintage breeds—the long-legged Barred Plymouth Rock, the full-breasted Dark Cornish, and the gangly Buckeye—all of them formerly prized varieties on American farms that are virtually unknown to the present-day chicken-eating public. At a long table in the living room sat 20 or so farmers, breeders, chefs, and others who had flocked here to taste these heritage birds and to brainstorm ways to bring them back to the table.

The event was hosted by the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, a nonprofit group dedicated to the revival and conservation of rare farm breeds. Hosting culinary events hasn't been the traditional bailiwick of the ALBC, whose primary mission has been researching and cataloguing old breeds valued by farmers on the livestock show circuit who appreciate



Ruling the Roost

FARE

RECIPE

Chicken and Dumplings

SERVES 8

This dish (previous page) from Andrea Reusing of the restaurant Lantern, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, highlights the flavor of heritage chicken.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 4-lb. heritage chicken (see page 100), legs removed | 2 large yellow onions, cut into 1" chunks |
| Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste | 1 fresh bay leaf |
| 1/4 lb. slab bacon, cut into slivers | 2 2/3 cups flour |
| 2 tbsp. canola oil | 1 cup white wine |
| 2 tsp. dried thyme | 1 tbsp. baking powder |
| 4 cloves garlic, chopped | 1/2 tsp. baking soda |
| 4 medium carrots, thickly sliced | 5 1/2 cups melted butter, cooled slightly |
| 4 ribs celery, thickly sliced | 3/4 cup buttermilk |
| | 2 tbsp. finely chopped parsley |

1. Halve chicken legs, separating thigh from drumstick; season with salt and pepper; set aside. Put remaining chicken into a pot; cover with salted water; boil. Reduce heat; simmer until breast is just cooked, 12–15 minutes. Remove chicken. Cut breast and wings from carcass. Discard any skin and bones from breast and wing meat; cut into 1" chunks; chill. Return carcass to pot; simmer for 1 hour. Strain; reserve 4 cups broth (save remainder for another use).

2. Meanwhile, cook bacon in a large wide pot over medium heat until crisp, 8–10 minutes. Transfer bacon to a plate; leave fat in pot. Add and heat oil; brown drumsticks and thighs, 8–10 minutes. Transfer to a plate. Add thyme, garlic, carrots, celery, onions, and bay leaf; cook until light brown, 18–20 minutes. Add 2/3 cup flour; cook for 1 minute. Add wine; cook for 1 minute. Whisk in reserved broth and salt and pepper to taste. Nestle in drumsticks, thighs, and bacon. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, for 15 minutes.

3. Whisk together remaining flour, baking powder, baking soda, 1 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper in a bowl. Combine butter, buttermilk, and parsley in a second bowl; pour into flour mixture; stir to make a thick batter. Uncover pot; add breast and wing meat. Drop batter in 8 large spoonfuls over the top. Simmer, covered, until dumplings are cooked, 20–25 minutes.

them for their colorful history and appearance. Lately, though, cooks have been rediscovering the gustatory pleasures of these hitherto hard-to-find birds, which have fuller and more-distinct flavors than both their supermarket counterparts and even most organic, pasture-raised poultry. The vast majority of chickens in those categories belong to a single commercial crossbreed called Corn Rock, which has dominated the poultry market since the 1960s and has been scientifically engineered so that the birds mature in six weeks, as compared with vintage-breed birds, which are slaughtered after 16 weeks and thus have a deeper flavor and firmer texture.

"The farmers who have maintained these breeds have always known that they taste better," said Don Schrider, a friendly ALBC employee in his early 40s, as we sat down to the tasting. He gave an affectionate peroration on the Buckeye, which, he explained, was invented by an Ohio farmwife named Nettie Metcalf in the late 1800s. Schrider had raised the Buckeyes being served and had reason to be proud; they had dark, delicious thighs and fragrant white meat. The two other heritage varieties we were sampling—Dark Cornish and Barred Plymouth Rock—were from a fourth-generation Kansas poultry farmer named Frank Reese, who is renowned in poultry circles for the genetic purity of his breeding stock and is credited with popularizing heritage-breed turkeys, with the help of Slow Food, the global organization dedicated to preserving traditional foodways.

Today, old-breed chickens are on the rebound. Farmers are raising Buckeyes through Slow Food's Renewing America's Food Traditions project, and Reese's chickens are available through the mail-order company Heritage Foods USA. Soon Reese will reintroduce two more once popular birds: Black Jersey Giants (a large variety once favored for roasting) and New Hampshire Reds. Chefs like Andrea Reusing—who has served many of these birds at her restaurant, Lantern, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina—are learning how to cook with these diverse chickens, and home cooks are singing their praises, too.

"A woman called me in tears not too long ago," Reese told me recently. She wanted to let the farmer know that she had bought one of his Barred Plymouth Rock birds and, after 40 years of marriage, had finally made chicken and dumplings that met with her husband's enthusiastic approval. She had convinced herself that she was a flawed cook. "She said to me, 'Now I know that all these years it wasn't me. It was the chicken.'" (See *THE PANTRY*, page 100, to find out where to buy heritage chickens and to learn more about the ALBC.) —Dana Bowen

A TASTE of TRADITION



BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCK Birds of this once popular breed (a miniature version of which is pictured, above) have a high breastbone and long, dark-fleshed legs that take well to braising. Poach or sauté the flavorful breast.



DARK CORNISH With their plump breast, these birds look and cook the most like the supermarket variety, but the flavor is almost nutty and the ample underskin fat bastes the meat as it cooks.



NEW HAMPSHIRE RED Until the commercial Corn Rock crossbreed came along, birds of this meaty variety, introduced in 1935, were popular at the table and renowned for their pure, chickeny flavor.



BUCKEYE The white meat of chickens belonging to this Ohio-born breed is starkly white and fragrant; the dark meat is rich and gamy. Like all heritage birds, Buckeyes yield incredibly flavorful stock.



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FARE

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them for their colorful history and appearance. Lately, though, cooks have been rediscovering the gustatory pleasures of these hitherto hard-to-find birds, which have fuller and more-distinct flavors than both their supermarket counterparts and even most organic, pasture-raised poultry. The vast majority of chickens in those categories belong to a single commercial crossbreed called Corn Rock, which has dominated the poultry market since the 1960s and has been scientifically engineered so that the birds mature in six weeks, as compared with vintage-breed birds, which are slaughtered after 16 weeks and thus have a deeper flavor and firmer texture.

"The farmers who have maintained these breeds have always known that they taste better," said Don Schrider, a friendly ALBC employee in his early 40s, as we sat down to the tasting. He gave an affectionate peroration on the Buckeye, which, he explained, was invented by an Ohio farmwife named Nettie Metcalf in the late 1800s. Schrider had raised the Buckeyes being served and had reason to be proud; they had dark, delicious thighs and fragrant white meat. The two other heritage varieties we were sampling—Dark Cornish and Barred Plymouth Rock—were from a fourth-generation Kansas poultry farmer named Frank Reese, who is renowned in poultry circles for the genetic purity of his breeding stock and is credited with popularizing heritage-breed turkeys, with the help of Slow Food, the global organization dedicated to preserving traditional foodways.

Today, old-breed chickens are on the rebound. Farmers are raising Buckeyes through Slow Food's Renewing America's Food Traditions project, and Reese's chickens are available through the mail-order company Heritage Foods USA. Soon Reese will reintroduce two more once popular birds: Black Jersey Giants (a large variety once favored for roasting) and New Hampshire Reds. Chefs like Andrea Reusing—who has served many of these birds at her restaurant, Lantern, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina—are learning how to cook with these diverse chickens, and home cooks are singing their praises, too.

"A woman called me in tears not too long ago," Reese told me recently. She wanted to let the farmer know that she had bought one of his Barred Plymouth Rock birds and, after 40 years of marriage, had finally made chicken and dumplings that met with her husband's enthusiastic approval. She had convinced herself that she was a flawed cook. "She said to me, 'Now I know that all these years it wasn't me. It was the chicken.'" (See *THE PANTRY*, page 100, to find out where to buy heritage chickens and to learn more about the ALBC.) —Dana Bowen

A TASTE of TRADITION



BARRED PLYMOUTH ROCK Birds of this once popular breed (a miniature version of which is pictured, above) have a high breastbone and long, dark-fleshed legs that take well to braising. Poach or sauté the flavorful breast.



DARK CORNISH With their plump breast, these birds look and cook the most like the supermarket variety, but the flavor is almost nutty and the ample underskin fat bastes the meat as it cooks.



NEW HAMPSHIRE RED Until the commercial Corn Rock crossbreed came along, birds of this meaty variety, introduced in 1935, were popular at the table and renowned for their pure, chickeny flavor.



BUCKEYE The white meat of chickens belonging to this Ohio-born breed is starkly white and fragrant; the dark meat is rich and gamy. Like all heritage birds, Buckeyes yield incredibly flavorful stock.



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FARE

AGENDA

NOVEMBER

3

Anniversary:
1966**FAIR PACKAGING AND
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On this day, Congress passed the first law requiring manufacturers to identify the contents of their packaged items. For food producers, this truth-in-labeling measure marked the first step toward what we now know as the standardized nutrition label, which began appearing on packages in 1990.

NOVEMBER

1, 3, 4, 10, 11

**FIERA NAZIONALE DEL TARTUFO
(NATIONAL TRUFFLE FAIR)***Acqualagna, Italy*

The white, knobby truffles harvested in autumn across the Marche region of Italy may be less famous than their Piedmontese cousins, but many believe that they're just as tasty. Gather in the town's Piazza Centrale to taste, buy, and sample truffles and dishes made with them, like bruschetta topped with shaved truffles and scrambled eggs. Information: 212/245-5618.



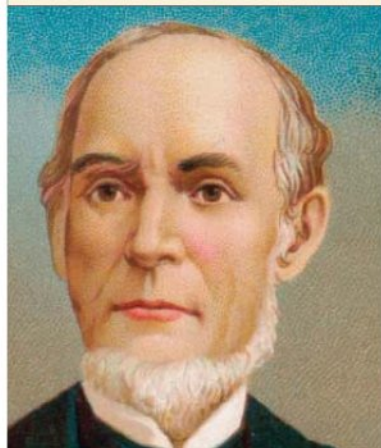
NOVEMBER

9

Birthday:

GAIL BORDEN JR.*1801, Norwich, New York*

Little-known fact: before he became the father of the American dairy industry, Gail Borden Jr., who was born on a farm in upstate New York, invented the "meat biscuit"—a groundbreaking (if unappetizing) convenience food consisting of dehydrated meat and flour. He's far better known for introducing shelf-stable condensed milk, which he patented in 1856.



NOVEMBER

9-11

**THIRD ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
TAMALE FESTIVAL***Los Angeles, California*

In revitalized MacArthur Park, a tamale-eating competition and a contest to create the largest tamale make for high drama and draw 65,000 people each year. But the main attractions are the tamales in every imaginable flavor, from traditional shredded beef to contemporary interpretations like lobster-ginger. Information: www.losangelestamalefestival.com.

NOVEMBER

14

Birthday:

PROSPER MONTAGNÉ*1865, Carcassonne, France*

Born in southeastern France, this passionate chef, educator, and restaurateur oversaw the traveling camp kitchens of Allied combat units during World War I. After that, he accomplished an even more impressive feat by helping to define classical French cuisine with his seminal reference work *Larousse gastronomique*, which was first published in 1938.

NOVEMBER

21-24

CHITLIN' STRUT 2007*Salley, South Carolina*

Since 1966, this small town (population 410) has celebrated chitterlings (pork intestines, also called chitlins) prepared in the traditional Southern fashion: boiled, battered, and fried. Less adventurous eaters will be glad to know that the event features plenty of other Southern fare, as well as a hog-hollering contest, a parade, dances, amusement park rides, and country music. Information: 803/258-3485.



NOVEMBER

23-25

WINE COUNTRY THANKSGIVING*Willamette Valley, Oregon*

This wine region, in the northwestern part of the state, is best known for its fine pinot noirs. On this holiday weekend, more than 100 local wineries—many otherwise closed to the public—present barrel tastings, new releases, and limited-quantity selections. Each winery sets out its own spread of wine-friendly food for stoppers-by. Information: 503/646-2985.



NOVEMBER

30

ST. ANDREW'S DAY*St. Andrews, Scotland*

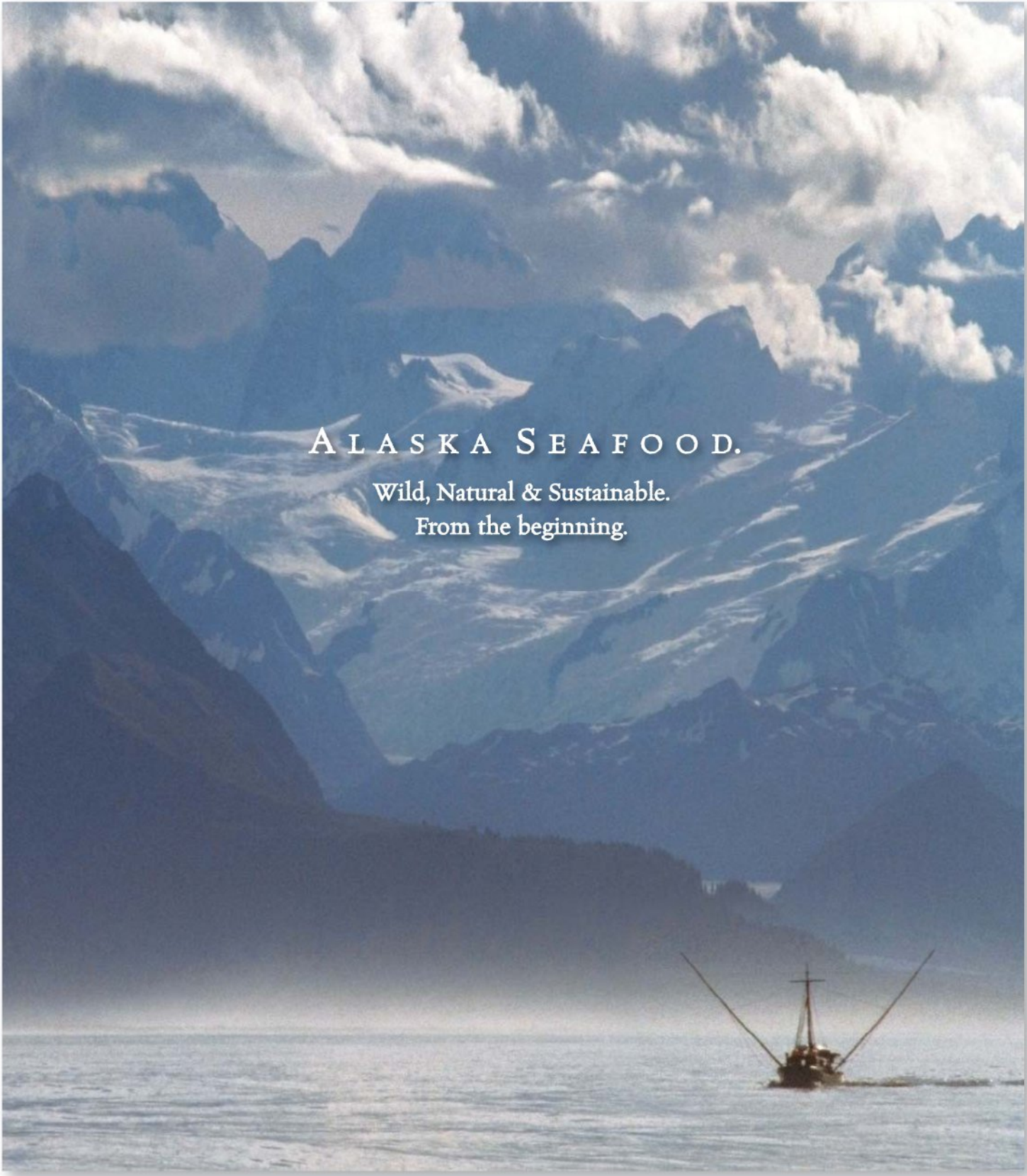
Of all the towns that celebrate this annual holiday for Scotland's patron saint, none put on as big a show as his namesake burg. At this citywide *ceilidh* (pronounced KAY-lee), or festival, spirited Highland fiddling and dancing call for heaps of haggis, the savory offal sausage, served with tatties and neeps (potatoes and turnips). Information: 44/131-472-2033.

Mystery in
a Can

I was at a pick-your-own pumpkin patch in Virginia when the idea struck: wouldn't it be great to bake a few pies using fresh pumpkin instead of canned? I loaded a couple of promising specimens into the trunk of my car, took them home, roasted them, and puréed the flesh into a smooth filling. The pies were horrible: the inside was watery and fibrous and had none of the rich, custardlike texture I loved. Pushing away my plate, I swore my eternal allegiance to pumpkin in a can.

So, why is the canned stuff so much better than the real thing? "Jack-o'-lantern pumpkins were bred for eye appeal and have an iconic harvest look," says John Ackerman, a third-generation pumpkin farmer in Morton, Illinois, which bills itself as "the Pumpkin Capital of the World." "But they don't have a thick flesh, and they weren't bred for taste." The familiar-looking, bright orange pumpkins you see on windowsills at this time of year belong to one of two predominant showpiece varieties: *appalachian* or *magic lantern*. By contrast, the pumpkins most canneries use are of a type called *dickinson*. Like its bigger cousins, the oblong dickinson belongs to the *Cucurbita* family of squashes, but it's not much to look at, with its shallow ribs and dull yellow shell. "For cooking, though, it's hard to beat," says Ackerman.

You won't find dickinsons at your grocery store, but ask for them at farmers' markets, where they're often sold with other squash. "You might also try an amish pie or a winter luxury," says Ackerman, referring to two other kitchen-friendly pumpkin varieties. "They all make wonderful pie." —Todd Coleman



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ALWAYS OPEN

If you're going to lock yourself out of your car, you couldn't be luckier than I was this past summer in Yuba City, a small farming town in Northern California's Central Valley. It was late at night, but I could see the arched gates of Sri Guru Nanak Gurdwara, a Sikh temple hidden amid the area's fruit and almond orchards. The doors were open, and a sleepy priest waved me inside, offering to call a mechanic. Before he did, the elderly man escorted me to a cavernous kitchen and served me a snack of roti, cumin-scented lentils, and homemade lemon pickles.

It wasn't the first time I'd been on the receiving end of Sikh hospitality; I frequently stop at gurdwaras, as Sikh places of worship are called, when I'm traveling across California. The temples' communal kitchens, or langars, constitute a pillar of the Sikh religion, which originated in the northern Indian region of Punjab in the 15th century. The practice of serving meals at any hour of the day to all comers, regardless of religion, gender, or social standing, traveled to California with Sikhs who emigrated to the state more than a century ago to work in its burgeoning agriculture industry. From the spare kitchen of California's first gurdwara, in Stockton, to the sprawling cooking facility in a recently completed temple in San Jose, langars depend entirely

on equipment, ingredients, and labor donated by local Sikh families. Recipes and serving styles vary from temple to temple, but the simple, satisfying food is always vegetarian (while not all Sikhs abstain from eating meat, the serving of vegetarian meals ensures that no one leaves hungry).

On a recent return visit to Yuba City's gurdwara, I encountered a white-haired woman with an impish grin moving with quiet efficiency around the kitchen. She introduced herself as Taj Kaur and told me that she rises every morning before dawn to make her coveted roti, which she sometimes flavors with fresh, aromatic fenugreek leaves. More volunteers arrived throughout the day: one man peeled ginger from a large sack while reciting his prayers; another crushed spices for the day's tea. Near a set of huge, hemispherical woks known as karhais, women sat on low, wooden stools peeling potatoes and debating just how much sugar syrup is required for besan laddoo, a chickpea-flour confection enriched with ghee.

The tempo in this kitchen and in those of gurdwaras all over California, I learned on subsequent visits, reaches its peak on the first Sunday in November, which marks the annual Sikh holiday known as Nagar Kirtan. On that day, more than 5,000 people arrive in Yuba City to join processions of elaborate floats while, along the sides of the roads, volunteers from across the county proffer the kinds of food cooked in the langars, frying pakoras, stirring curries, and stacking trays of tooth-numbingly sweet desserts. As always, all are welcome to share in the plenty. —Thy Tran



THE OREGON CHEF

AS IN SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T BELIEVE IN TURNING RICH SOIL INTO PARKING LOTS FOR STRIP MALLS WHERE WE EAT FOOD SHIPPED IN A CAN FROM IMBUKTU, BUT RATHER IN TURNING RICH SOIL INTO RICH, FLAVORFUL BEETS AND BERRIES AND HAZELNUTS AND WITH THEM CONCOCTING DELICIOUS, DELECTABLE FOOD FROM YOUR OWN SOIL. AMEN.

There is a chef called Greg Higgins who rode out west—on his bicycle—and when he got to Oregon, after having biked all the way from New York, he was very hungry. Down in the valley there were organic hazelnuts and squash, broccoli and herbs, apples and pears, beets and berries. And over to his right were huge open spaces with big, beautiful beef cattle roaming freely about, munching grass. On the coast he found salmon and cod, pink shrimp and Dungeness crab. And as his belly grumbled away, he had a crazy idea. He called up Cory Schreiber and Vitaly Paley and other Oregonian chefs, and they made a pact. Their goal: to create an Oregon cuisine using the unique flavors of local wines, meats, fruits and vegetables. And they were not one bit surprised that after a while people began to say, "Let's eat Oregonian tonight." And now it is easy to find delicious Oregon cuisine every night. Come to Oregon.

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Greg Higgins, Chef/Owner Higgins Restaurant and Bar, Portland, Oregon

FARE

Spirits, Revived

RYE WASN'T POURED at the first Thanksgiving, but this amber spirit is the country's original whiskey, dating to pre-Revolutionary War times. It's what George Washington distilled at Mount Vernon and what he taxed in 1791, setting off the protests in western Pennsylvania that became known as the Whiskey Rebellion. Rye fell out of favor after Prohibition, however, owing in part to the increasing popularity of bourbon, its sweeter cousin. But recently rye has been regaining a foothold, as cocktail enthusiasts encounter its nuanced charms (and those of traditional recipes for old-fashioned and manhattans, which call for rye).

Autumn is the perfect time of year to snuggle up to rye's warm flavors. "Bourbon tends to be sweeter, more caramel-vanilla, but rye's a little spicier, a little fruitier," says LeNell Smothers, proprietor of LeNell's, a



Workers at the Wild Turkey distillery, in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, load barrels of rye.

whiskey-centric liquor shop in Brooklyn, New York. Like bourbon, she explains, the spirit is aged for at least two years in new, fire-charred white-oak barrels. Whereas federal law requires that a bourbon's grain mash contain at least 51 percent corn, rye is made from at least 51 percent rye and usually a lot more, so it has a bolder, more distinctive flavor.

Smothers is such a rye lover that she's been bottling her own brand, called Red Hook Rye (named for the neighborhood where her shop is located), from a stash of barrels she acquired in Bardstown, Kentucky, from Kentucky Bourbon Distillers, the same company that selects and bottles whiskey for the highly respected boutique bourbon brands Johnny Drum and Rowan's Creek, among others. At the distillery, she found rye that had been aged for a whopping 24 years. "I went down to their ware-

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FARE

Tasting Notes

house, and I tasted a bunch of barrels until I found what I wanted,” Smothers says in her soft Alabama drawl. “At that age, it’s hard to find a whiskey that’s not completely woody. This one had a real nice creaminess and texture and still maintained some fruit and spice.”

While most rye producers dilute their whiskeys with water before bottling, Smothers bottles hers straight from the barrel, at a very high proof (133), which translates into a fiery character that all but demands a splash of chilled water or ice. “I wanted whiskey in its pure state,” she says. “You get more flavor that way.” As with most long-aged ryes (which are in short supply), time in the barrel makes for pricey bottles—hers cost \$110 each. While Smothers often sings the praises of less expensive brands, like Rittenhouse and Wild Turkey (see “Tasting Notes”, right), her customers don’t seem to mind paying extra for her magnificently complex version. (See *THE PANTRY*, page 100, for rye sources.) —*Paul Lukas*

Most of these rye whiskeys are best sipped neat or with just a small amount of water or ice, which tames the alcohol’s heat and can help the whiskey’s flavor to open up.

BLACK MAPLE HILL (95 proof; \$87). Eighteen years in the barrel give this rye a strong, oaky flavor and just a hint of toffee-like sweetness.

JIM BEAM STRAIGHT RYE (80 proof; \$15). This affordable, light-bodied rye delivers a slight spiciness and a mellow flavor. A good choice for mixing.

MICHTER’S 10-YEAR (93 proof; \$75). Hints of vanilla characterize this exceptionally smooth, velvety rye.

OLD OVERHOLT (80 proof; \$15.50). Tamer than the higher-proof brands, this whiskey is suitable for sipping straight and is a good starting point for rye rookies.

OLD POTRERO 19TH CENTURY (90 proof; \$65). Fritz Maytag, the man behind San Francisco’s Anchor Steam beer, has earned his distiller’s stripes with this spectacular rye, which is made with 100 percent rye malt.

RED HOOK RYE (133 proof; \$110). The creamy complexity of this long-aged, small-batch rye is underscored by notes of wood and smoke.

RITTENHOUSE (100 proof; \$16). Mellow oak balances with a hint of spice in this easy-sipping, cocktail-friendly whiskey.

SAZERAC 18-YEAR (90 proof; \$55). This long-aged rye (blended from several small-batch barrels) offers pleasing fruit flavors and a toasty, buttery finish. An excellent value.

VAN WINKLE FAMILY RESERVE (96 proof; \$45). This famed bourbon producer makes a sophisticated, 13-year-old rye that has a long finish and refreshingly mentholated notes.

WILD TURKEY RYE (101 proof; \$23). The Austin Nichols Distilling Company, best known for its Wild Turkey bourbon, also bottles a fine rye that has a nicely spicy edge. —*Dana Bowen and Paul Lukas*

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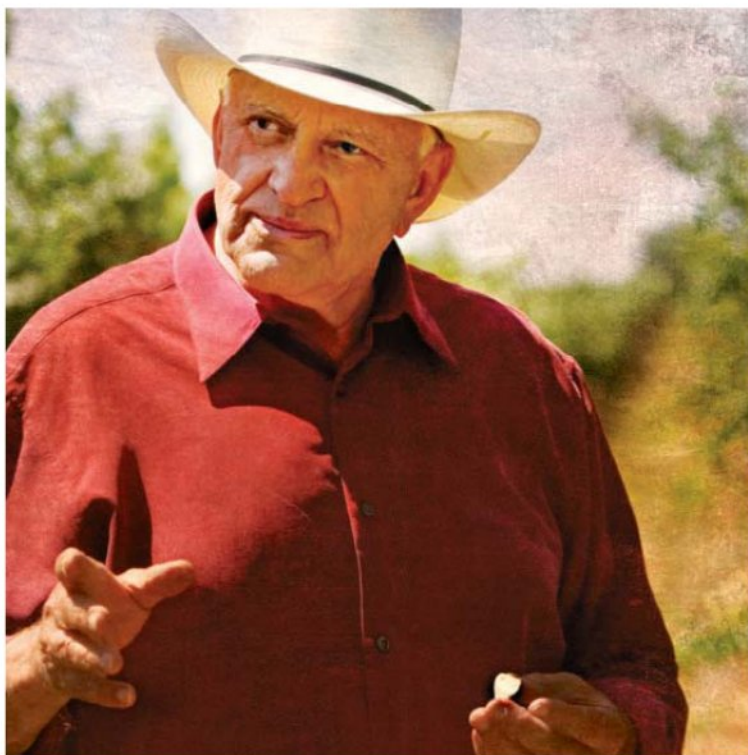
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CURRY HEAT

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Jess Jackson, Taylor Peak Estate, Bennett Valley



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BOOK REVIEW

Eating in America

Two expansive new tomes tackle the subject of our ever changing national appetites

BY STEVEN SHAW

FOR MY 18TH BIRTHDAY my parents gave me an old set of the 11th edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, which on the scale of birthday presents ranked somewhere ahead of tube socks but behind the Ford Mustang I'd asked for. Published in 1911 and for years the standard against which all encyclopedic works were measured, the 11th edition attempted to describe every aspect of the universe in entries written by some of the greatest thinkers of the day. Though it was a good while before I warmed to the gift, those volumes have become invaluable resources, more meaningful to me than anything on four wheels.

Recently, two other eminently respectable and exhaustively researched works—one from the Library of America and the other from Oxford University Press—set out to do for American food and food writing what *Encyclopedia Britannica*'s famed 11th edition did for knowledge in general. Utilizing different approaches and achieving varying degrees of success, editors Molly O'Neill and Andrew F. Smith, themselves gifted food writers, have produced what are perhaps the two most ambitious works of their kind to date.

In *American Food Writing*, O'Neill uses the means of literary anthology to tell the story of our country's foodways, having collected excerpts from 250 years' worth of American prose. Although the selections are heavily skewed toward the postwar era (a bias O'Neill attributes to the fact that food writing as a genre is a relatively modern invention), she has clearly taken pains to choose the best works in the canon, from those of standard-bearers like M.F.K.

Fisher to less predictable contributions from such writers as Nathaniel Hawthorne and Willa Cather.

A major hurdle when one is compiling an anthology is to create a coherent, flowing whole; otherwise, reading one cover to cover can become tantamount to completing a marathon in a series of 50-yard dashes. O'Neill meets the challenge handily. In the introduction, she offers her vision of food literature as a window onto the

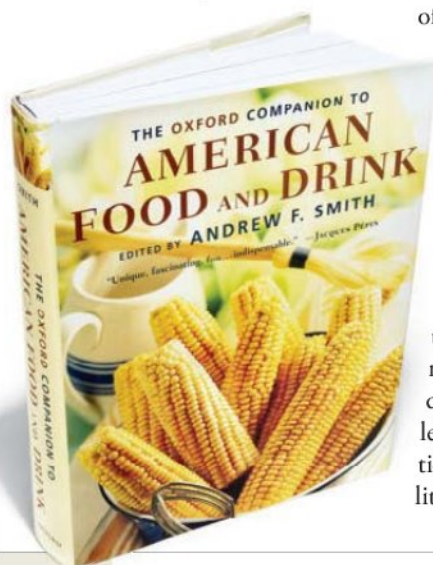
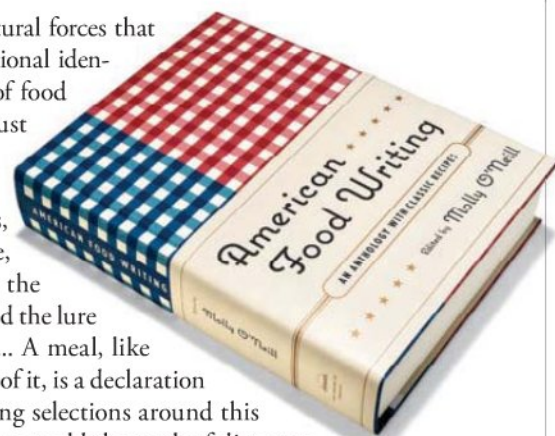
sociological and cultural forces that have shaped our national identity. "A good piece of food writing is never just about the food," O'Neill states. "It is, among other things, about place and time, desire and satiety, the longing for home and the lure of the wider world.... A meal, like the written account of it, is a declaration of self." By organizing selections around this idea, O'Neill is able to mold the work of disparate authors—whether it's Amelia Simmons on hoe cakes or Jhumpa Lahiri on Indian takeout—into a unified story.

Even the 145 recipes included in the book are carefully chosen, not only for the role they have played in the arc of American culinary history but also for the clues they give to bygone eras. For example, James Beard evokes visions of the mid-20th-century kitchen by suggesting that his recipe for beef stroganoff (1959) is "fun to do at the table if you have an electric skillet", and a recipe in *National Cookery Book* (1876) for making shortcake while camping contains the instruction "Get your Indian guide to find a smooth sapling."

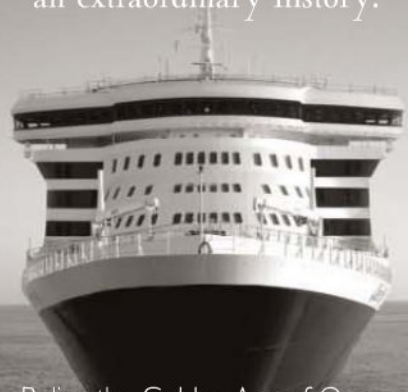
One could quibble with a few of O'Neill's choices. I questioned whether the excerpt from John McPhee's 1967 book *Oranges* represents that prolific author's best food writing. And where are Mimi Sheraton and Jane and Michael Stern? But we all have favorites, and O'Neill's selections, which she contextualizes in the well-researched paragraphs that introduce each piece, are often surprising and always satisfying.

THE FOOD HISTORIAN and author Andrew F. Smith, with *The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink*, has undertaken the formidable task of compiling and editing a more streamlined successor to the colossal, two-volume *Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*, which sells for \$250. The result is a single, 693-page, alphabetized reference book that reflects the collective efforts of more than 200

STEVEN SHAW is the author of *Turning the Tables: The Insider's Guide to Eating Out* (HarperCollins, 2006).



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BOOK REVIEW

scholars, who set out to chronicle American food culture, from Aunt Jemima to heirloom vegetables to terrapin and the zombie (the potent rum cocktail, that is).

Among the entry bylines, you'll find a wealth of leading lights, including Russian-cuisine historian Darra Goldstein, Jewish-food authority Joan Nathan, and master mixologist Dale DeGroff, as well as Smith himself, who wrote many of the book's best pieces. Smith's thoughtful portraits of iconic American foods, brands, and culinary inventors demonstrate his gift for

can food and drink". The project is, in part, a victim of its subject's complexity, but even so, there is room for growth. Perhaps by the time the publication's own 11th edition rolls off the press, the book will have blossomed into a truly worthy companion. 

American Food Writing: An Anthology with Classic Recipes *edited by Molly O'Neill (Library of America, \$40)*; The Oxford Companion to American Food and Drink *edited by Andrew F. Smith (Oxford University Press, \$49.95)*.



RECIPE

James Beard's Beef Stroganoff

SERVES 6-8

One of many timeless recipes featured in *American Food Writing* is James Beard's take on this comforting noodle dish, pictured (left). "There are many different versions," the chef writes in *The James Beard Cookbook* (Dell Publishing, 1959), the book from which the excerpt is taken. "Beware of those that specify long cooking. Beef stroganoff is much better when prepared quickly."

- 1½ lbs. filet of beef
- 6 tbsp. butter
- Olive oil
- 2 tbsp. chopped green onions, white and green parts
- ¼ cup white wine or vermouth
- A.1. sauce or worcestershire sauce
- 1½ cups sour cream
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- Chopped parsley
- Cooked egg noodles

1. Cut the beef into very thin slices, or, as Beard recommends, ask your butcher to do it for you.

2. Melt 4 tbsp. of butter in the pan and get it as hot as you can without burning; if you add just a bit of olive oil to the butter it helps prevent it from turning brown. Sauté the beef slices in the hot fat very quickly. When they are delicately browned on both sides and done (this takes only a minute or two), remove them to a hot platter. Add remaining butter and the chopped green onions and cook for a minute. Then add white wine or vermouth and a dash or two of A.1. sauce or worcestershire sauce and the sour cream. Stir well and heat through, but do not boil, or the sour cream will curdle. Salt to taste and pour the sauce over the beef. Top with a sprinkling of freshly ground pepper and chopped parsley. Serve atop egg noodles.

placing trends in a broad historical context. For example, after laying out the bare facts in the entry for White Castle, the fast-food hamburger chain, Smith concludes, "The cumulative effect of White Castle's success, and the successes of its competitors and imitators, elevated the hamburger sandwich from disgrace and obscurity in 1921 to a position of respect and prominence by the close of the decade."

Smith does a better job as a contributor than as a compiler, however. While most of the thousand or so entries are independently interesting and thoroughly researched, the book as a whole is not complete enough to be an all-in-one reference in the tradition of *Larousse Gastronomique* or the late Alan Davidson's *Oxford Companion to Food*. Nowhere is this more evident than in the haphazard selection of biographical entries, which include Charlie Trotter but not Thomas Keller, Martha Stewart but not Rachael Ray.

Indeed, Smith's preface to the book warns that it "is not intended as the final word on Ameri-

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Austin

When it comes to food, Austin is more than just a destination for spicy Tex-Mex and smoky barbecue.

With its local universities and a thriving technology business, Austin has a growing international population—and a variety of delicious foods that have come along with it. Austinites now love not only local ingredients but global delights as well. Here are ten Austin gems that offer some of the best from both worlds.

1. Ace Mart Restaurant Supply

Don't let the name deceive you; this affordable kitchen equipment warehouse is open to the public. Local cooks and foodies alike flock to this shop for its array of knives, baking equipment, and even tabletop goods. Downtown store: 1025 W. 5th Street; **512/482-8700**; north store: 1025 W. 5th Street; **512/832-9933**; www.acemart.com.

2. Boggy Creek Farm

Two days a week, Larry Butler and Carol Ann Sayle open their farm to the public and sell their produce under the towering live oak tree in their front yard. Look for a number of Texas originals at their stand, including locally raised beef, bison, and lamb, and Larry's divine creations, such as his smoke-dried tomatoes and homemade jams. Subscribe to the farm's weekly newsletter to find out what items will be at market. Open to the public Wednesdays and Saturdays, 9:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.; 3414 Lyons Road; **512/926-4650**; www.boggycreekfarm.com.

3. Central Market With its unrivaled fish market, its in-house tortilleria, and the widest selection of produce in town, Central Market has long been Austinites' favorite gourmet grocery store. Its north Austin location also houses a cooking school to inspire delicious education. North store: 4001 North Lamar Boulevard; **512/206-1000**; Westgate store: 4477 South Lamar Boulevard; **512/899-4300**; www.centralmarket.com.

4. Fiesta Mart This popular store is the best place in town for buying chiles—dried and fresh—and Mexican specialties like chorizo. Fiesta Mart is also an affordable source for dried fruits and nuts in bulk. 3909 North IH35 Service Road at 38½ Street; **512/406-3900**; www.fiestamart.com.



Grape Vine Market, above, is one of Austin's many superb food shops.

5. Fresh Plus Catering to University of Texas students and gourmet cooks alike in its Clarksville neighborhood, this small grocery sells specialty items like house-smoked meats and a delicious selection of ready-to-eat foods. 1221 West Lynn Street; **512/477-5574**.

6. Grape Vine Market This north

Austin store stocks not only beer from 17 countries around the world and more than 5,000 wines but also decadent offerings like caviar, chocolates, and over 200 cheeses, as well as all manner of bar equipment. It employs some of the most wine-savvy staff in town. 7938 Great Northern Boulevard; **512/323-5900**; www.grapevinemarket.com.

7. MT Supermarket Open since 1984, this anchor store in Austin's new Chinatown Centre, home to some of the city's best Asian restaurants and shops, boasts 55,000 square feet of Asian ingredients, including a produce department and a fish market. If you're exploring the bright flavors of Chinese, Philippine, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, or Vietnamese cuisine, this is the ideal destination to visit for stocking your pantry. 10901 North Lamar Boulevard; **512/454-4804**; www.mtsupermarket.com.

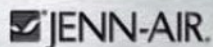
8. Phoenicia Bakery & Deli This bakery and deli has quickly become a one-stop shop for global comfort food. Known for its Mediterranean treats—outstanding pita, six varieties of feta cheese, 18 kinds of olives, and rich, flaky pastries—it's also an excellent spot to find superb Polish, Spanish, and Turkish foods. South store: 2912 South Lamar Boulevard; **512/447-4444**; north store: 4701A Burnet Road; **512/323-6770**; www.phoeniciabakery.com.

9. Sunset Valley Farmers Market With live bands on market days, this award-winning farmers' market has it all: local produce, cheeses, breads, and meats. Not to be missed are artisanal cheeses from Pure Luck Organics farm and Dr. Kracker flatbread from Dallas. Open Saturdays, 9:00 A.M.-1:00 P.M.; 3200 Jones Road; **512/280-1976**; www.sunsetvalleyfarmersmarket.org.

10. Whole Foods Market This 80,000-square-foot flagship store is situated in downtown Austin and offers a wide selection of produce (much of which comes from Texas growers), house-made sausages, an impressive selection of bulk dry goods, and a rooftop ice rink in the winter. 525 North Lamar Boulevard; **512/476-1206**; www.wholefoods.com/stores/lamar.



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LIVES

Parma of the Plains

A couple in Iowa are giving the prosciutto makers of Italy a run for their money

BY CHRISTOPHER HALL

DAWN BREAKS CLEAR over Norwalk, Iowa, casting a thin, uncertain light across the landscape. But inside La Quercia Artisan Cured Meats, a boxy, steel-framed building overlooking this Des Moines suburb where new housing tracts meet cornfields, a long day's labor has already begun for Herb and Kathy Eckhouse.

Wearing white hairnets and gloves, they work with three of their employees to salt more than 500 fresh, locally produced hams that were delivered yesterday afternoon. Vulnerable to tearing, each ham must be held from underneath, like a fat, pink baby, as it's carried to a table for a careful sprinkling of sea salt—too much, and the ham will taste like a salt lick; not enough, and it will rot. It is work that neither Herb, a former corporate executive, nor Kathy, a homemaker, ever expected to be doing in their mid-50s. But that's what happens when a pipe dream becomes reality; in this case, the dream was to transform Iowa pork into a prosciutto to rival the celebrated Italian hams of Parma and San Daniele.

Originally the products of a home business started by the Eckhouses in 2000, La Quercia hams are becoming notable in the world of American artisanal foods. Though the company also produces pancetta, the undisputed stars of the show are its hams, made from humanely raised pigs, including an organic prosciutto and a Berkshire ham culaccia—the Eckhouses' take on an Italian cut of ham taken from the rear of the leg. (The latter is the first breed-specific dry-cured ham in America.) All are boneless, unpressed hams that are cured with nothing other than salt,

according to traditional Italian methods, which the Eckhouses adapted for the corn- and soybean-fed hogs they use.

Some people are born to a mission; others, like the Eckhouses, discover theirs only after a lot of living. "I grew up in a Jewish household outside Chicago, so pork wasn't exactly a staple of my childhood," says Herb. He met his future wife during a post-college hitchhiking trip out West; her cousin had given him a lift and persuaded him to come to the Idaho ranch where Kathy, the daughter of an artist and a Berkeley academic, was working. She'd landed there after university in California, England, and Idaho, a gig as a London au pair, and a stint with a lay order of nuns in Italy. After getting married, Herb and Kathy lived near San Francisco while he studied business and worked for a bank and she did agricultural economic research. They relocated to Des Moines when Herb was offered a job as an assistant comptroller at Pioneer Hi-Bred, the Iowa seed company founded in 1926 by a populist businessman and politician named Henry Wallace.

Prosciutto might never have entered the Eckhouses' lives—indeed, become their lives—had it not been for what Kathy calls simply "the move". In 1985, after just four years at Pioneer, Herb was transferred to Parma to head the company's operations in Italy. "I honestly don't think I'd ever tasted prosciutto before then," says Kathy, who has sparkling blue eyes. By the end of their more than three-year stay and with Kathy expecting their third child, they were eating prosciutto twice a day, five days a week.

For both Herb and Kathy, the Parma years were an education. "We always enjoyed good food," says Herb, as he stands in a darkened room where hundreds of curing hams hang in perfect symmetry, like a porcine corps de ballet. "But what really struck us was how the Italians cook and eat—the importance of simple, high-quality ingredients. I became absolutely passionate about prosciutto, and I was especially interested in the miraculous way that two ingredients, pork and salt, can become so intensely perfumed and flavored over time. It's like alchemy."

The 1999 sale of Pioneer, one of the last independent major American seed companies, to the chemical conglomerate DuPont proved to be a turning point. "I was 50 years old and had worked at Pioneer since my early 30s," recalls Herb, a lean man with a thatch of unruly, graying hair. "It was a company I believed in. But with that sale, Pioneer became just another giant corporation obsessed with profits. I could feel myself dying there, and I knew I had to get out."

Herb took early retirement, and in 2000 he and Kathy formed La Quercia—the name is Italian for oak tree, a symbol of the province of Parma and, coincidentally, the state tree of Iowa—and began to im-



Prosciutto hams aging at La Quercia's factory in Norwalk, Iowa.

CHRISTOPHER HALL *writes about food and architecture for the New York Times, Smithsonian, Architectural Digest, and other publications.*

LIVES



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port prosciutto. Having learned that no artisanal-quality prosciutto was then being produced commercially in the United States, he also researched the possibility of making and selling their own, an idea that had started to take root after the couple's return from Italy.

"There are far more hogs than people in Iowa," he says, "but all that Iowans had done in the past was ship our best raw materials out of state. I wanted to add some value to those products. I thought it would be good for Iowa and for the farmers here. But Kathy and I also realized pretty early on that we didn't want to simply make a Parma ham. We wanted a ham that would reflect the high quality of our local products, one that could be an American standard-bearer alongside the great hams of Europe."

In 2002, after gaining firsthand knowledge and industry contacts in Parma through La Quercia's import business, Herb began to make prosciutto. Using the Eckhouses' split-level home in Des Moines as a ham lab, he tried out different breeds of pork and ways of trimming, salting, and curing it. "There were hams in the garage, hams in the basement," says Kathy. "Sometimes, when the weather was nice, Herb would take a rolling rack of his hams outside for a walk in the fresh air to see how it would affect the curing process. Some of the neighbors thought we were pretty strange."

At the time, many U.S. producers were eager to capitalize on Americans' appetite for prosciutto di Parma (which in 1989 became the first Italian ham to be imported to the U.S. and now accounts for 90 percent of the \$100 million worth of Italian ham brought into the country each year). They took pains to reproduce the methods used in Parma, which include curing for at least 12 months, feeding the pigs a whey-based diet, and pressing the hams into the distinctive, chicken leg Parma shape. But the Eckhouses concluded they were more interested in finding techniques that best brought out the qualities of the local meat. They also experimented with other dry-cured hams, like smoked speck and culaccia. For the latter, they opted for fuller-flavored (and more expensive) Berkshire hogs, whose short muscle fiber yields a silkier, glossier ham than those made with standard, leaner breeds.

The February 2005 opening of the Norwalk plant launched the Eckhouses into the world of prosciutto in a big way. Each year, 25,000 fresh hams purchased from various farms undergo the transformation into prosciutto, progressing through six rooms where state-of-the-art equipment—the same kind as that now used by many

Italian producers—replicates the temperatures, humidity, and wind conditions of the winter-through-summer curing cycle that has traditionally dictated the dry-curing of hams in much of western Europe. The first two rooms, where just-salted meat is held for a week, are as cold and damp as a northern Italian December and have a distinctly sweet aroma. In another room—its climate corresponding roughly to that of early spring—fans create cool winds, while in the last room, where hams ripen like fine cheese in warmer and drier conditions, the air smells strongly of late-summer apples.

FOR THE ECKHOUSES, the plant opening provided at least a semblance of normal home life. "With the business at home, we could never escape," Kathy says. "Either there was prosciutto to work to do or housework. We spend a lot of time at the plant—I work about 40 hours a week, and Herb puts in upwards of 70." When reminded that many, if not most, husbands and wives couldn't spend so much time together without entertaining an occasional ill thought, she laughs. "Sure, there have been sensitive moments. But when we first met, we farmed side by side, all day long. In many ways, we're children of the '60s. Both of us grew up thinking that our lives could be a seamless whole aimed toward some greater good, whether it's raising our kids or making prosciutto."

The nearly 10,000-square-foot, \$2 million plant, however, does pose a new challenge. "This is a huge risk," says Kathy, who admits to having had sleepless nights. "We were essentially a debt-free family, and suddenly I'm writing these monster checks every month to banks. What if there's a malfunction at the plant? What if we can't get the distribution we need? It's kind of scary."

"Those first weeks were stressful," Herb recalls. "There were problems with the trim and with getting the refrigeration right, and our Italian consultant, Giorgio, kept yelling at me. But after the first hams were salted, he and I went into the room where they were curing. This beatific look came over his face, and he said, in Italian, 'How beautiful—they're pissing!' which is an expression they use in Parma to describe the way they drip as they cure. The smell in that room, fresh and sweet, was the same one I'd smelled so often in Parma, and it made me feel everything was going to be okay. I whispered to the hams, 'Be delicious. Just be delicious.'" And they were. 

THE PANTRY, page 100: Information on how to order La Quercia products.

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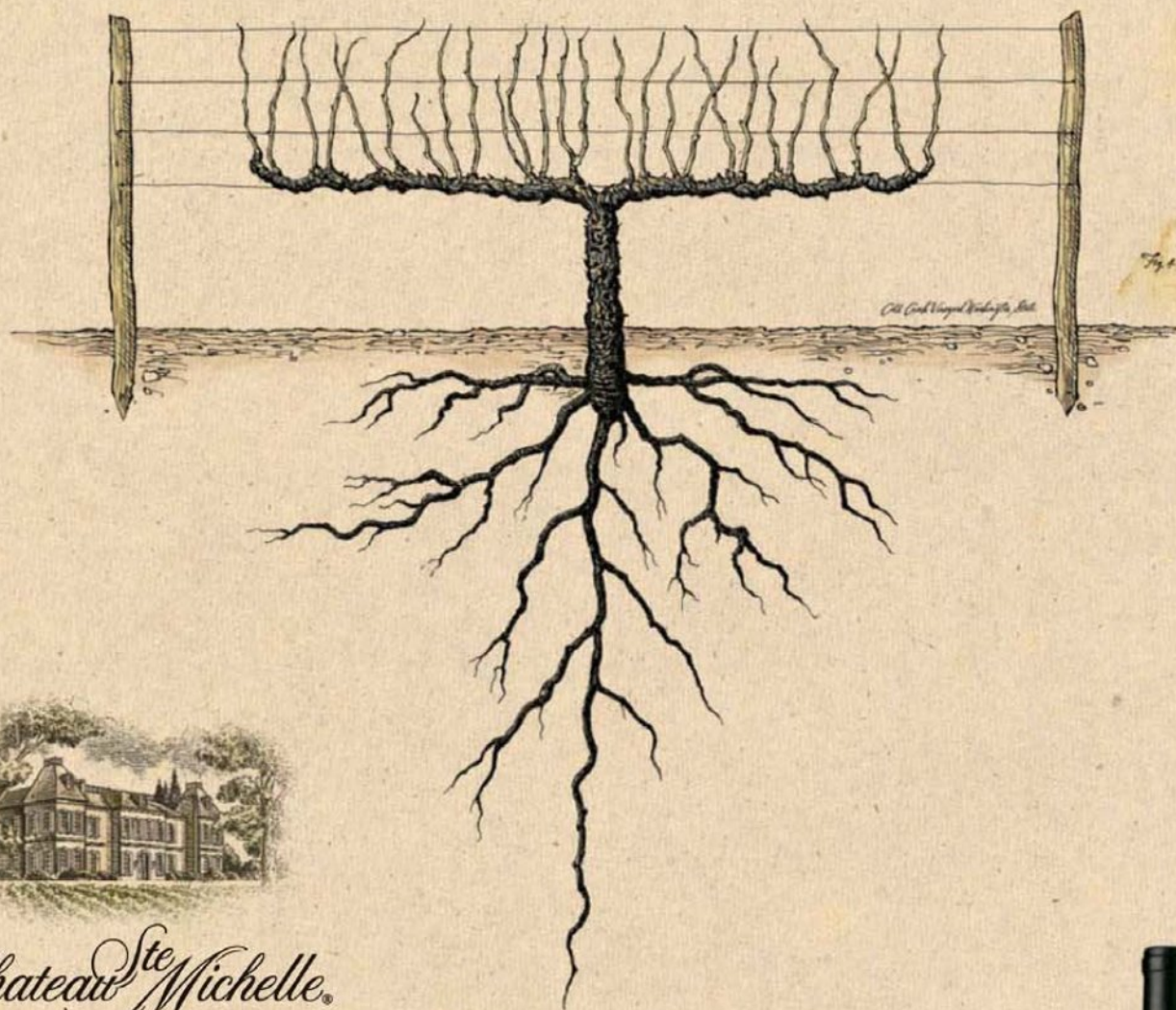
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MEMORIES

All in the Family

At Grandma's Thanksgiving table, at least the brownies were good

BY PETER SAGAL

THANKSGIVING WAS ALWAYS at my grandmother's house, in suburban Boston, and every year the menu and rituals of the feast were as immutable as the Latin mass—a series of consecrations measured out in increasing doses of animal fat. First, the chicken soup, made by boiling a chicken and various whole vegetables and served in shallow bowls that allowed grease globules to form ever changing archipelagos. My grandmother (Rose Scholnick, but known to all as Dubie) would dole out a single onion or carrot to each person. To her, discarding a vegetable merely because you had pointedly, intentionally boiled every last wisp of flavor out of it would have been an unthinkable transgression. Next came the vegetable side dishes, each long-cooked to the same khaki shade. Then the meats: beef brisket—because what if you didn't like turkey?—and then the turkey, a desiccated bird that was impossible to like.

The conversation was invariably as overheated and tasteless as the main dish. My grandmother and grandfather would argue, loudly. After he died, the arguing continued, with varying players and varying topics. Nothing was ever meant by it: our ghetto language, as we moved to the second and third generations of American Jews, went from Yiddish to Squabbling. My father would argue politics with anyone, despite whatever else was being discussed around the table. One Thanksgiving, my younger brother, after having endured it all in silence throughout his youth, interrupted a lengthy disquisition about the state of affairs to shout, "None of you have any idea what you're talking about!" It occurred to me that he had attended four years of college and three years of law school just so that he'd finally be able to say that with some force.

Then we'd eat brownies, which were excellent. Dubie had a gift for brownies.

She died more than ten years ago, and since then we have gathered at my parents' home to

experience ever paler imitations of those family feasts: the endless afternoons stretching from the three o'clock charred-meat festival to the funeral moment around eight when my mother begins picking at the carcass of the turkey, making "yummy" noises, and the rest of us flee to bed.

Over the years, my wife, Beth, became more and more desperate as the holiday approached. "Tell you what," she would say. "We'll just stay at home, burn some noodle pudding, and argue about the president for four hours. It'll be the same experience, with-



out the airfare." But, much as a salmon can't help trying to swim upstream and beat itself senseless against the rocks, I cannot help joining my family for Thanksgiving.

Two years ago, we hit on an obvious solution: why not host the event ourselves? According to the classic division of labor, my wife would prepare the soup, vegetables, breads, and accompaniments. I would handle the turkey. I brought two weapons to bear on the creature: first, I decided to brine it, to ensure a juicy bird, which, in this crowd, would be as surprising and unexpected as one that leapt from the platter and took flight around the room. Second, to guar-

antee flavor, I would prepare an herb butter and spread it underneath the skin before cooking.

On Thanksgiving morning, my parents arrived, followed by other veterans of Dubie's long-abandoned dining room. Everyone was on guard, particularly my mother, who had an inbred compulsion to host and kept coming into the kitchen asking for something to do. She looked on, amazed, as Beth skimmed the fat from the chicken soup and then, horror of horrors, threw out the vegetables. I watched her twitch visibly as she restrained herself from plunging into the garbage can to save them. As for me, I carefully prepared the herb butter and then, grabbing some in my hand, slipped it under the skin at the rear of the turkey's breast and massaged it in. It was a strangely intimate thing to do, and the bird seemed exposed and vulnerable. That made two of us.

When dinner was almost ready, I sat in an anxious fog as my family oohed and aahed over the side dishes, which seemed like Technicolor Oz compared with the black-and-white Kansas of our former Thanksgiving meals. The brussels sprouts were bright green, the carrots a lovely orange. Then the moment arrived: I opened the oven and removed what observers agreed was the most picture-perfect turkey seen outside a Norman Rockwell painting. My family, for the first time in its 50-year history of Thanksgivings together, fell silent. I carved the bird carefully; it was distributed and consumed with looks of wonder and, dare I say, gratitude. Compliments were offered. Perhaps a tear was shed.

Then the squabbling began, and, thus, all was as it should be. Tradition makes no judgments; that is left to us, and we do it gladly.

We finished the meal with a tray of brownies, carefully made from Dubie's recipe. Some things just can't be improved on. 🐦

PETER SAGAL's most recent article for *SAVEUR* was "Let Them Eat Pâté" (October 2007).

KITCHENWISE



In Good Company

There's no such thing as too many cooks at this communal house in California

BY NIKKI SILVA AND MOLLY PRENTISS PHOTOGRAPHS BY BARBARA RIES

FOR AS LONG AS ANYONE CAN REMEMBER, Saturday has been Charles's night to cook, and on this Saturday evening he's grilling salmon. He has also recruited a few friends and family members to make pizzas, pasta with fresh pesto, and a plethora of side dishes, salads, and desserts. At the kitchen's long butcher-block counters and all around the eight-foot-long stainless-steel central island, there is a bustle of clanking, cooking, snacking, and chatting as the kitchen's gravity field draws people

in from all over the ten-acre, hilltop cohousing development near Santa Cruz, California, where we live.

Dinnertime is the kitchen's golden hour (both figuratively and, because of the sunset reflecting off of nearby Monterey Bay, literally),

NIKKI SILVA is a coproducer of the NPR radio series *Hidden Kitchens* and the coauthor of a book by the same name (Rodale, 2005). MOLLY PRENTISS, her daughter, is a writer and artist.

KITCHENWISE

and it is our favorite time of day. At La Selva, as our community is named (for the nearby coastal town of La Selva Beach), each adult has a designated night for feeding the rest of the group—a job that everyone, including Charles, embraces with gusto.

La Selva, which today encompasses a two-story main house as well as several separate bungalows and studios where we sleep and work, was born in 1979, when a small band of like-minded friends and acquaintances bought the property. We didn't have a shared religion or spiritual philosophy; just a common goal of creating an affordable, cooperative, beautiful place to live.

A core group of about ten people, many of us founding residents, live here now, including the two of us, Nikki Silva and Molly Prentiss, and the other members of our immediate family, Charles Prentiss (Nikki's husband and Molly's dad) and Grace Prentiss (Nikki's daughter and Molly's sister). Also in residence are Chris Baer, an artist and home designer, his wife, Mary Bennett, an office manager, and their daughters, Madelaine and Annie, as well as Joanne Bauer, a financial adviser, and her husband, Greg Becker, an interpreter for the U.S. State Department. The numbers have risen and fallen over the years. Kids have been born and raised and gone off to college, friends have stayed for long stretches, and one resident's father contentedly lived out his last five years here surrounded by his family and grandchildren.

The group has no formal bylaws or rules and functions like an oversize family. Ask any of us, and we'll tell you that one of the principal reasons that our system works and that we're all living here so happily is to be found in the commune's sole kitchen.

Located in the main house, which also contains a communal living room, a dining area, and a breakfast nook, the 300-square-foot kitchen is the focal point of life at La Selva. Though it's big enough to accommodate 40 people comfortably at a Thanksgiving dinner, it somehow always manages to feel intimate. Wide-open, interconnected spaces allow people sitting in virtually any part of the house to talk with the people doing the cooking and to smell the enticing aromas. Indeed, the kitchen, with its ample counter space, two sinks, and capacious commercial refrigerator, all but demands group participation.

Recycled equipment and materials are the kitchen's flesh and bones, thanks mostly to Chris, who is a self-described scrounger. The stainless-steel counter and attached sink, the swinging doors that separate the kitchen from the dish room, and the copper pipes used throughout the building came from a restaurant in San Francisco that we purchased the salvage rights to and stripped bare. Our three-door industrial refrigerator was a bargain from a secondhand-appliances dealer, and the giant circular dining table, where we've enjoyed countless leisurely meals, sipping



Spic and Span | What do people fight about when they share a kitchen? Dishes, of course! We built a dedicated dish room with a commercial dishwasher to solve the problem. After dinner we load it up and run it through its superefficient two-minute cycle.



The Incredible Expandable Kitchen | It's hard to imagine running out of space in a kitchen this big, but when we're cooking a multicourse meal for a lot of people, it happens. Chris Baer (center) and his youngest daughter, Annie (far left), cook at the back counter, having moved two trays of salmon filets to sit on a makeshift countertop—a rolling storage cart—until the grill outside is ready. The kitchen's multiple workstations are handy not just at dinnertime but also when we descend on the space individually throughout the day to make our own breakfasts and lunches.

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KITCHENWISE

wine and arguing about politics, was acquired from an old Chinese restaurant. Even the kitchen's maple floorboards had a previous life—as a dance floor at a now shuttered local restaurant—and the 50-foot fir trusses that support the ceiling and make the house's open plan possible were salvaged from a defunct municipal bus station.

At times, however, practical concerns have won out over thrift and our environment-conscious mentality. Our old Wolf stove, purchased at an auction in 1980, was plagued with gas leaks and inconsistent temperature controls. After years of suffering through rare or overcooked turkeys on Thanksgiving and countless burned cookies and pies, we broke down last year and replaced the appliance with a shiny, state-of-the-art six-burner model. The new unit—equipped with an electric ignition, a cast-iron French top, and dual electric convection ovens with bright blue interiors—has met with the house members' universal approval, especially on the part of the bakers among us.

As the kitchen evolved through the years, we also found that the physical walls of the building could not contain us (or our cooking). On many evenings a handful of people spill out onto the back porch to grill fish, steaks, and vegetables on our gas barbecue or make pizzas in a commercial wood-burning oven that we rescued from a pizzeria. We also like to retire to the patio at the end of the meal, after the dinner

dishes are done, to relax by the fire and gaze at the stars.

Still, the kitchen remains the heart of the house; it's here that we feed ourselves and our friends, share stories, and hash out the commune's day-to-day problems. Everyone who lives here has a theory about what makes the kitchen work so well. Grace, who is 18, thinks it has to do with the sheer size of the place. "We buy everything in large quantities," she says, "so you know you won't put a noticeable dent in something. That way, people feel welcome to go into the fridge at any time." Charles, an artist and designer, chalks it up to the espresso machine and the ever present beer keg, which is kept in the refrigerator. "That's all you really need," he says. For most of us, however, the fundamental attraction of our kitchen is the simple fact that—maybe because of the way the room is designed, maybe because of the ever changing cast of cooks who inhabit it, or maybe just because everyone has to eat—it always brings us together. 

THE PANTRY, page 100: Information about the National Public Radio show Hidden Kitchens.

Would you like to share your own kitchen design ideas with other SAVEUR readers? Send us photos of your kitchen, both overall and in detail, along with your name, address, and a few lines telling us what's special about it. Please note that unused submissions cannot be acknowledged or returned. Our address: Kitchenwise, SAVEUR, 15 East 32nd Street, 12th Floor, New York, NY 10016.



Local Riches | Shopping for three families all together has made us experts in the fine art of buying food in large quantities. Nikki, the designated shopper for our basic items, heads to the farmers' market in nearby Aptos every Saturday for produce from Bay Area farmers.



Evening Repast | The long counter separating the kitchen from the dining room often resembles a glorious cafeteria, with multiple entrees and side dishes sitting alongside big salads and desserts. When we started eating at our round dining table, we tried serving all the food on a lazy Susan, but the huge number of dishes just wouldn't fit on it. Now we serve everything buffet style, which is especially useful when family and friends join us or kids are home from college and meals overflow into the breakfast nook and other parts of the house.

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Light Cheddar Butternut Squash Soup

Makes 4-6 servings

2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and cut into chunks

4 cups chicken or vegetable broth

1 cup sour cream (low-fat or regular)

1/2 cup grated Cabot 50 % Light Cheddar

2 tablespoons salted butter

1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper (cayenne)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

1 tablespoon sugar (optional)

Several chives, cut into 1-inch pieces



1. In large saucepan, combine squash and broth. Bring to boil, then reduce heat to medium. Simmer until squash is very tender, about 20 minutes.
2. Remove from heat and let stand until slightly cooled; puree in batches in blender.
3. Return puree to saucepan and place over medium-low heat. Stir in sour cream, cheddar, butter and red pepper. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Stir until heated through (do not allow to boil). Taste soup, adding sugar if squash was not particularly sweet. Serve sprinkled with chives.

Recipe courtesy of Chef Jon Ashton

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SOURCE

Snap, Crackle, Pop

These native Cape Cod cranberries pack a punch

BY BETH KRACKLAUER

WHEN I'M MAKING SAUCE WITH THE average supermarket cranberry, there's only so much I can do. I've tried to boost the zing factor with ginger and used every type of citrus zest. But what's the use in tarting up a berry that isn't sufficiently, well, tart? Then I tasted a specimen from Cranberry Hill, an organic producer at the base of Cape Cod. Its oblong berries had a bright, bracing flavor and released an audible pop when bitten into. Here were berries, I thought, that required little embellishment.

According to Kristine Keese, who harvests the cranberries from a six-acre bog she co-owns with her husband, Robert, the key to such characteristics is a high skin-to-berry ratio. The fruit the Keeses cultivate—two native varieties, called howes and early black, that have grown wild in southeastern Massachusetts for centuries—are smaller and have less pulp than the hybrids coming out of Wisconsin, the nation's top producer. Since a cranberry's tartness resides largely in its skin, she told me, a smaller berry is bound to be more flavorful.

A less-is-more belief is in fact what first motivated the Keeses, in 1988, to start growing their cranberries organically, something no other Cape Cod producer was doing. "Everyone told us it was impossible," Kristine says. "We thought that was ridiculous. They grow as a wild fruit, don't they?" It's true that, without the aid of chemical fertilizers, Cranberry Hill's yield is roughly half that of a conventional bog. But letting nature take its course has rewards, too. "When you don't spray, a balance returns to the ecosystem. Birds and beneficial insects come, and by the time you're in fruit, the pests aren't around in numbers you need to worry about." The Keeses have also found that when their vines aren't pushed to produce more than they would naturally, they are remarkably disease resistant.

The howes and early black varieties were selected by Cape Cod farmers in the 19th century for their hardiness and also for their deep color and firm flesh. When Robert Keese was growing up in the area, these were the berries that he and all his neighbors helped harvest each autumn. Since the mid-20th century, most of that work has been performed by machines, and each year more acreage is devoted to the pulp-heavy crossbreeds favored by juice companies.

In effect, Cranberry Hill's small, hand-harvested crop is an edible artifact of the region's history. These are, after all, virtually the same berries that the *Mayflower's* passengers would have tasted back in 1620—just the sort of pedigree you might be looking for at Thanksgiving time. For me, it's enough to find berries that retain their shape and bite even after they're cooked, rendering the humblest of condiments as exquisite as caviar. Fresh cranberries from Cranberry Hill are available in five-pound bags for \$25, ten-pound bags for \$50, and 15-pound bags for \$75. To order, call 508/888-9179 or visit www.localharvest.org or www.organiccranberries.com.



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CLASSIC

The Queen's Beans

How an iconic Thanksgiving casserole came to be

BY TODD COLEMAN

GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE—that perennial Thanksgiving side dish of french-cut green beans baked in a mushroom-cream sauce and topped with crisp fried onions—was such a tried-and-true favorite at my family's holiday table when I was growing up that I hardly paid any attention to it. Only recently did I uncover its colorful history.

Like most American casseroles, this one can trace its roots to the Depression era, which gave rise to a number of one-dish meals that made the best of readily available and inexpensive ingredients. By the end of the Second World War, numerous forerunners of today's classic green bean casserole could be found. A 1947 *New York Times* article included a recipe for a version made with sliced frankfurters. Another recipe, published in the *Los Angeles Times* three years later, called for a mixture of green beans, hamburger, condensed tomato soup, and a biscuit topping.

It wasn't until 1955, however, that the dish's most steadfast incarnation entered the scene. This enduring formula, one that many home cooks still use, called for a trinity of convenience products: canned Durkee or French's fried onions, Green Giant canned green beans, and Campbell's condensed cream of mushroom soup, usually accompanied by milk, soy sauce, and a dash of pepper. It was invented by the Campbell's Soup Company, which, as it still does, emblazoned its soup can labels with recipes that featured the company's products in a starring role. According to Cindy Ayers, the vice president of Campbell's Kitchens, the recipe was first tested in order to fulfill a request from Cecily Brownstone, the food editor at the Associated Press, who sought help in reproducing a green bean casserole she'd tasted at a press dinner. "We partnered with a lot of writers back then," Ayers says. "It was a pretty common practice at the time."

The dinner that Brownstone had attended took place at the home of John Snively, a wealthy



citrus rancher in Florida, and his wife, May. The conceit of the event was that the Snivelys had served a replica of the evening's menu to Iranian royalty: Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi and his wife, Queen Soraya, who had recently paid a visit to the ranch. Mrs. Snively had presented a memorable meal of brunswick stew and a delicious green bean casserole made with cream sauce and mushrooms. The queen, Mrs. Snively told the assembled members of the press, had apparently loved the casserole and "had eaten [it] with gusto". With that, Brownstone had her story and, thanks to some help from the Campbell's Soup test kitchens, her featured dish. The article she wrote was headlined "Beans Fit for an Iranian Queen", and the recipe that ran with it was dubbed "Beans and Stuff", which is how the Snivelys' less than silver-tongued butler had allegedly announced the dish.

Over the years, the Campbell's Soup Company has subtly altered the recipe (which debuted as "Green Bean Bake"), but the basics have remained essentially unchanged. "They tried to create a recipe using ingredients that most consumers had on hand at the time," says Ayers. "No one had any idea that it would turn into the iconic dish that it is today." 🍴

RECIPE

Green Bean Casserole

SERVES 6-8

This recipe is an adaptation of the one developed in the 1950s by the Campbell's Soup Company.

- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 oz. dried shiitake mushrooms, stemmed
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 lbs. green beans, cut into 2" pieces
- Canola oil
- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 2 small yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 5 tbsp. butter
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

1. Bring stock to a boil in a small pot. Remove from heat; add mushrooms. Cover; let soften for 20 minutes. Strain; reserve broth. Thinly slice mushrooms; set aside. Meanwhile, bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add green beans; cook until tender, 6-7 minutes. Chill beans in an ice bath; drain and pat dry.

2. Pour oil into a large pot to a depth of 2". Heat over medium-high heat until oil registers 350° on a deep-fry thermometer. Put 1 cup flour into a bowl. Working in batches, toss onions in flour; shake off excess and fry until golden brown, 3-4 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate and season with salt.

3. Heat oven to 375°. Grease an 8" x 8" casserole with 1 tbsp. butter; set aside. Melt remaining butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in remaining flour; cook for 1 minute. Pour in reserved broth while whisking; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, whisking occasionally, until thickened, 15-20 minutes. Whisk in cream and combine with beans, half the onions, and salt and pepper in a bowl; transfer to casserole. Top with remaining onions; bake until bubbly, about 20 minutes.

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Close to the Land

Thanksgiving dinner on a small family farm in West Virginia is intimately tied to the seasonal rituals of America's rural past

AT DAYBREAK ON THE MORNING BEFORE Thanksgiving, Bob Canterbury, a 62-year-old West Virginia farmer, walks out the kitchen door of his family's redbrick farmhouse, puts on a beat-up baseball cap, and lets Kate, his border collie, out of her pen on his way to feed the hogs. Frost covers the ground, and the outlines of leafless white oaks along a fence line are just beginning to take shape against a slate gray sky. Beyond the trees, grazing cows stir on the horizon. "The cattle are still out on the grass now," Bob tells me, as he fills a bucket with corn-and-soybean meal just outside the hog barn, already noisy with activity, "but I'll bring them in come December." § Seen from

BY ROGER MORRIS PHOTOGRAPHS BY LANDON NORDEMAN





Bob and Carolyn Canterbury carry on a tradition of self-reliance that reaches back generations

the Canterburys' front yard, the farm country in this corner of southeastern West Virginia—a broad plateau of pastureland, deep ravines, and limestone caverns situated between the New and Greenbrier rivers—looks about the same as it must have a century ago. The land is a patchwork of modest, family-owned spreads of a few dozen acres each, many of them farmed by distant descendants of the English, Scottish, and Irish immigrants who settled in this area before the Revolutionary War.

Bob was born a few miles from here and moved with his family to this farm, near the town of Sinks Grove, when he was 12 years old. He got married—to Carolyn Neely, a butcher's daughter from Kanawha County—after high school and joined his father in running the farm. Bob and Carolyn had three children: Doug, Tina, and Paula, each of whom is also married with children and lives not far away. All of them are on their way home for tomorrow's Thanksgiving feast. Thanks to acquaintances from my years growing up just west of here, in the Elk River valley, where my own English and Irish ancestors settled, I've received an invitation to join them, making this holiday a homecoming of sorts for me, too.

As is true of most of their big family meals, almost all the food that will be served at the Canterburys' Thanksgiving dinner has been grown and raised on the farm

or hunted nearby and preserved by old-fashioned methods of salting, drying, canning, and cold storing. At a moment when increasing numbers of Americans are experimenting with raising their own food or at least stocking their pantries with locally produced goods, the Canterburys are quietly carrying on a tradition of rural self-reliance that reaches back generations. Indeed, it would be hard to find a better place than Sinks Grove to get reconnected with the seasonal rituals and family-centered, agrarian way of life that Thanksgiving celebrations have traditionally honored.

BEYOND THE CANTERBURYS' HOG pens is a small garden, now stubbly and cleared of its bounty, where Bob and Carolyn grow vegetables for the summer table and also to preserve for the winter months. Carolyn cans most of the garden's vegetables at home, but the potatoes—a mainstay in the family's kitchen—are stored for as long as six months down the hill in a cavern that is cool enough to prevent the tubers from sprouting and warm enough to keep them from freezing.

The morning feeding done, Bob takes me to the cavern. We climb into his battered Dodge pickup and

ROGER MORRIS's most recent article for *SAVEUR* was about the red wines of France's *Entre-Deux-Mers* ("Sea Change", January/February 2007).



follow a rutted dirt road for a quarter mile to a tree-covered outcropping of rocks that conceals the cave's entrance. Making our way gingerly over a floor of moss-covered stones, we enter the cavern's cool anteroom, which, when Bob turns on his flashlight, reveals itself to be several times our height. Perhaps 20 yards away, to our left and right, passages lead further inside the cave, and straight ahead is a large wood barrel in which the Canterburys store the 14 or so bushels of kennebecs and other varieties of potatoes they harvest each year.

Later that afternoon, Carolyn, a cheerful 61-year-old with short, light brown hair, shows me where she stores everything from the garden that's not a potato. Lining basement shelves are colorful rows of one-quart glass jars containing canned green beans, tomatoes, beets, and other vegetables. "This is the cellar of the old farmhouse, which burned in 1988," she says. "We never knew what started that fire." As we head back upstairs, Carolyn tells how the community rallied around her and Bob after the disaster, offering gifts of money and clothing and helping the family to rebuild.

In the kitchen we find Tina, the Canterburys' 37-year-old daughter, who lives with her husband and two children in nearby Asbury, putting the finishing touches on a pumpkin cake roll studded with pecans and filled with vanilla-flavored cream cheese. "This farm was a great place to grow up," Tina says, as she

puts the dessert into the refrigerator to let it chill. "I used to love to roam the fields. Back then, we always slaughtered hogs on Thanksgiving, and I usually was the one who had to help to scrape the hair off with hot water." These days she has an office job, but she assures me that she'd happily clean a hog again if her dad ever decided to revive the tradition.

That evening, as a mist begins to envelop the hills around their house, I accompany Bob and Carolyn to the Sinks Grove Baptist Church, where the Reverend Mike Wilson, a limousine driver when he's not in the pulpit, welcomes 30 or so congregants for a Thanksgiving

Above, from left, pastureland on the Canterburys' farm; Coca-Cola-glazed country ham, a staple at the Thanksgiving table. Facing page, Bob Canterbury feeding his hogs.

METHOD

Coca-Cola-Glazed Country Ham

Cured country hams can be cooked with sweet beverages, like ginger ale, champagne, or, in this case, Coca-Cola, to counteract their salty character. Thoroughly wash the exterior of a bone-in whole country ham (15-17 lbs.; see page 100). Put ham into a large plastic container; cover with cold water. Cover and refrigerate ham until no longer overwhelmingly salty, about 14 hours. (Depending on the producer, country hams require different soaking times; see label or ask your purveyor.) Heat oven to 350°. Drain ham and pat dry; remove and discard skin. Transfer ham to a large foil-lined roasting pan. Pour 3 cups Coca-Cola over ham; cover tightly with foil. Roast, basting ham with pan juices every 30 minutes, until liquid has reduced to a thick syrup and a thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the ham registers 150°, about 3 hours. Uncover ham; continue roasting and basting until ham is crisp and registers 165°, 20-30 minutes more. Let rest briefly before slicing. Serves 10-12.

WEST VIRGINIA

There are few better places than the Sinks Grove farm to reconnect with the meaning of the holiday

Eve service. The church is small and functional, with one large meeting room that can hold perhaps a hundred people. A message board on a wall off to the side of the sanctuary announces that last week's donations amounted to \$661. A young woman volunteers to play the piano, and a few hymns are sung. Then, one after the other, worshippers stand up to share words of remembrance for a loved one who's passed on, to deliver good tidings about a marriage or a birth, or just to offer thoughts on the year nearly past. Bob rises. "Sometimes the days seem long," he says by way of introducing his musings on the nature of Thanksgiving, "but then sometimes we turn around and wonder where the time went."

ANOTHER FAMILY TRADITION THAT shows no sign of fading is the Thanksgiving morning deer hunt; it's an all-ages affair that begins at dawn, both at the Canterburys' spread in Sinks Grove and on the property of various family members and in-laws who live nearby. I've been invited to join Tina's husband, Gary Tuckwiller, who is going to hunt in the woods and fields surrounding his parents' home in neighboring Greenbrier County. With us are Gary's 16-year-old stepdaughter, Kayla, and a few other members of the Tuckwiller family.

"A lot of guys like to go out before daylight," says Gary, a tall, softspoken 42-year-old, as we make our way along a wire-fence-lined path leading away from the house. "But I like to wait until you can see through your scope, because you never know what you're going to pass up in the dark." Beneath a slowly brightening sky, I listen as Gary and the others debate the finer

points of deer hunting. A few members of the party like to hunt in the woods or along their edges; Gary says he prefers open fields. All agree that shooting a doe, even in season, is for kids and beginners.

After a few minutes, we reach a metal gate—one of many on the Tuckwiller homestead that allow passage from one grazing pasture to another—and split up. Several of the hunters head toward a wooded area not far away, and I follow Gary and Kayla along a curving dirt track that descends a hillside. Gary soon spots a deer across the valley, and Kayla raises the barrel of her rifle to view the animal through the gun's scope.

"Now, Kayla, you're too far away to shoot," Gary says. Turning to me, he adds, with visible pride, "She shot her first deer three years ago."

Over the next two hours, we see *(continued on page 52)*

RECIPE

Pumpkin Cake Roll

SERVES 8-10

This dessert (shown on page 50), a delicious alternative to pumpkin pie or pecan pie, consists of a pumpkin- and spice-flavored cake filled with sweetened cream cheese.

- 4 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. butter, softened
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup plus 1 tbsp. flour
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ground nutmeg
- Pinch of fine salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup canned pumpkin
- 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 cup roughly chopped pecans
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups confectioners' sugar
- 6 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

METHOD

Deviled Eggs

Deviled foods get their name from the fact that they benefit from the addition of an assertive ingredient, such as horseradish or chiles or, in the case of these deviled eggs, mustard and vinegar. Serve these treats (facing page) as hors d'oeuvres or along with the Thanksgiving meal itself, as the Canterburys do. Put 8 eggs into a small pot; cover with water by 2". Bring to a boil, cover, and remove from heat. Let stand for 8 minutes, drain, and run eggs under cold water to chill. Gently peel eggs and halve each lengthwise. Remove yolk from each egg half and transfer to a large bowl. Arrange whites on a large platter, cover, and refrigerate. Mash yolks well with a fork, then add 3 tbsp. mayonnaise, 1 tbsp. apple cider vinegar, 1 tbsp. melted butter, 2 tsp. yellow mustard, 2 tsp. sugar, and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Stir the egg yolk mixture until smooth. Using a small spoon, fill each egg white half with a rounded dollop of the egg yolk mixture. Loosely cover deviled eggs with plastic wrap and refrigerate until chilled. When ready to serve, sprinkle the eggs with paprika. Makes 16.

1. Heat oven to 375°. Grease a 10" x 15" jelly roll pan with 1 tsp. butter and dust with 1 tbsp. flour; tap pan to remove excess flour; set aside. Sift remaining flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt into a bowl; set aside. Beat eggs in a bowl with an electric mixer until fluffy and tripled in size, 4-5 minutes. Add granulated sugar in 3 parts, beating after each addition; beat until thick and creamy, about 2-3 minutes more. Stir in pumpkin and lemon juice; gently fold in flour mixture. Pour batter onto prepared pan; spread out to edges; sprinkle pecans over top. Bake until cooked through, about 15 minutes. Sprinkle a kitchen towel with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup confectioners' sugar. Working quickly, loosen edges of still-warm cake and turn out onto towel; roll up snugly like a jelly roll. Set aside, seam side down, to let cool, about 1 hour.

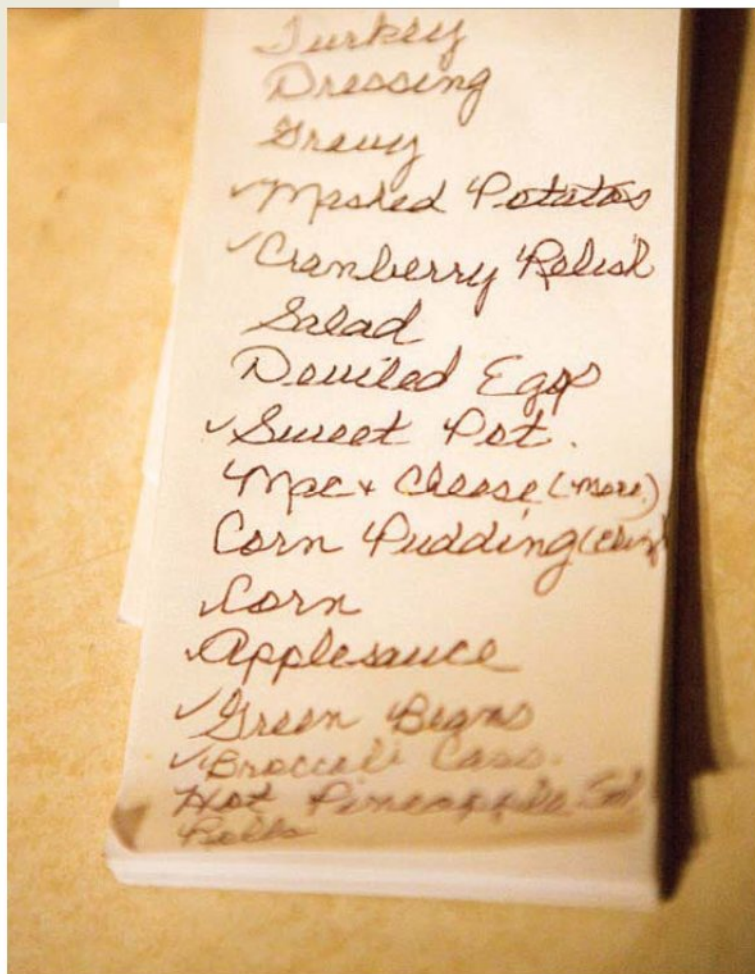
2. Meanwhile, beat together remaining butter and confectioners' sugar, cream cheese, and vanilla in a bowl, with an electric mixer, to make a smooth filling. Carefully unroll cake and spread with filling; gently reroll. Transfer cake to a platter, seam side down, cover, and let chill until set. Slice and serve.

Facing page, clockwise from top: Carolyn Canterbury and her daughter Tina Tuckwiller in the kitchen; the Sinks Grove Baptist Church; deviled eggs.



BOTTOM LEFT: ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI





Clockwise from top left: Carolyn Canterbury's shopping list; Adyson Hines, age two and a half, one of Bob and Carolyn Canterbury's granddaughters; a pasture on the Canterburys' farm. Facing page, pumpkin cake roll.



(continued from page 48) eight or ten deer at some distance, all does. When we rejoin the other party later, we learn that none of them fired a shot either, though one relative of Gary's saw a buck that he deemed too small to kill. "Save it for next year," he says. No one shows any sign of disappointment as we walk back toward the house along a wooded ridgeline.

IT'S NOON BY THE TIME we get back to Sinks Grove, and the Canterburys' house is filling up as the hunting parties return and other relatives arrive. Fueled by holiday excitement and anticipation, children are

scampering everywhere: two-and-a-half-year-old Adyson, the daughter of Paula and her husband, Michael; five-year-old Brandon and four-year-old Brianna, Tina and Gary's kids; and ten-year-old Tyler and 21-month-old Megan, the children of Doug Canterbury and his wife, Meredith.

I learn from Bob and Carolyn that Meredith is a "city" girl from nearby Lewisburg and that when she married Doug, the Canterburys let her know that she would have to take part in the family custom of showing a hog at the state fair. She received a crash course in livestock farming and was given an animal to groom for competition. As Meredith gamely paraded her hog before the judges, her friends cheered from the stands. Like a good Canterbury, she won a blue ribbon.

Though beef cattle have become a bigger source of income for the Canterburys, as they have for other farmers in this part of West Virginia, hog raising remains a time-honored part of the family business, and cured pork is given pride of place on many Thanksgiving tables in these parts. Bob Canterbury has made cured country-style hams and sausages from his own animals for decades, and this year Tina has brought a fresh ham from one of her own hogs for her dad to cure. "When we lived in the old farmhouse, we butchered nine hogs one year when Thanksgiving came around," Bob recalls, as he prepares the materials for curing on a

METHOD

Stewed Green Beans

Carolyn Canterbury uses a green bean variety called fatty horse, which she cans in the summer, when making her version of this dish. Cut 1/2 lb. sliced bacon into 1" pieces and transfer to a large pot. Cook bacon over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 10-12 minutes. Add 1 thinly sliced medium yellow onion and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until soft, 8-10 minutes. Add 3 tbsp. sugar, 1 quart water, and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste and stir well. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer, covered, for 15 minutes. Add 2 1/2 lbs. fresh large trimmed green beans cut into 2" pieces, increase heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until green beans are very tender, about 1 1/4 hours. Season with salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Serves 6-8.



wooden table in the yard. “Three or four families would get together to do it. Sometimes we’d fry the fresh liver for dinner, and we’d have tenderloin for supper.”

With Carolyn’s help, Bob rubs a mixture of coarse salt, brown sugar, and black and red pepper onto the raw ham. Then they wrap it in a cotton sheet, tie it tightly with twine, and hang it in a net from the rafter of a storage shed, where it will cure for up to a year or longer. “When my dad moved here, the first Thanksgiving we slaughtered a hog,” Bob says, “there was a man who lived across the road, and he came over that night and taught my dad this way to cure meat.” Unlike many local farmers, Bob prefers not to smoke the meat. When Carolyn offers me a sliver of a freshly baked ham that Bob cured last year, I am smitten by both its texture—moist yet flaky—and its taste, which I can best describe as pure Hampshire hog.

THANKSGIVING DINNER AT THE Canterburys’ is served buffet style. As the kids are herded into the living room, the kitchen counter is laid with a staggering array of food: country ham baked in a sticky-sweet Coca-Cola glaze, turkey and gravy, mashed potatoes, baked sweet potatoes, green beans stewed with bacon, onions, and sugar, bread stuffing, corn pudding, deviled eggs, macaroni salad, cranberry salad, broccoli casserole, fresh-baked rolls, and more. “We’ve added skillet-fried squir-

rel to the menu,” Carolyn announces, as she sets down a plate. Wild squirrel is avidly hunted in the wooded hills of West Virginia; Tyler shot the one being served tonight, he proudly announces.

Once everyone is assembled in the living room, Tyler is asked to say grace. Hands clasped together, he closes his eyes, and, in a sing-song voice, utters an oldie but goodie: “God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food.” After a full-throated “Amen”, the guests file into the kitchen to fill their plates and then disperse to various rooms of the house to find a free chair and dig in. Bob holds court at the dining-room table, telling old deer-hunting stories; and in the kitchen, the kids squeeze together around the small breakfast table and contentedly chow down. Everyone goes back for seconds.

After quick work is made of Tina’s pumpkin roll and the dishes have finally been cleared away, the family members, sleepy children in tow, slowly start making their way toward the kitchen door (the front door being for first-time visitors only). The good-byes are unhurried, spilling outside and reaching their conclusion only when all the cars have pulled away. At last Bob switches off the outside light and locks the door for the night. Tomorrow, like every other day in Sinks Grove, will start early. 🐾

THE PANTRY, page 100: A source for country ham.

Bob Canterbury at the Thanksgiving Eve church service in Sinks Grove, above. Facing page, from left, stewed green beans; Gary Tuckwiller, hunting deer.



UDON RISING

In the Japanese city of Takamatsu and its environs, these thick wheat-flour noodles have earned a cult following

BY SHANE MITCHELL PHOTOGRAPHS BY JUN TAKAGI



IF I DIDN'T HARBOR A FASCINATION with low-budget, food-fad movies, the odds of my winding up stamping noodle dough with my bare feet in the provincial Japanese city of Takamatsu would be close to zero. Don't get me wrong. This regional hub, on the island of Shikoku, 500 miles southwest of Tokyo, is a bustling port city, much like Baltimore or Melbourne, with poetic views of volcanic islands clustered in a silver bay on the Seto Inland Sea. It's just not on the beaten path for foreigners. When I told the Japanese



FACING PAGE: ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI

A patron, above, with a bowl of udon at Ikegami, a restaurant in Takamatsu. Previous pages, udon master Keiji Takeda preparing fresh sanuki-style noodles at his restaurant, Chikusei; his wife, Emi, serves customers.

Contributing editor SHANE MITCHELL's latest story for SAVEUR was "10 Ways to Eat on Oahu" (May 2007).

UDON THREE WAYS

1 Cold Udon

Cooking udon by adding cold water to the boiling noodles in several stages ensures that they cook all the way through yet stay pleasingly firm on the outside. Bring 2 gallons unsalted water to a boil in a large pot. For enough noodles for 4 people, add about 8 oz. dried, 10 oz. semifresh, or 16 oz. fresh udon (see page 60 to learn how to make them) and stir. When water comes to a boil, add 1 cup cold water. Let the water return to a boil and add 1 more cup cold water. When water returns to a boil for the third time, cook the noodles, stirring them occasionally, until tender, about 4-5 minutes for the dried and semifresh, and 6-7 minutes for the fresh. Drain the noodles in a colander and rinse them well under cold running water to stop them from cooking further and to remove any excess starch. Divide the noodles between bowls and garnish them as shown with finely sliced scallions, shichimi togarashi (seven-spice blend), freshly grated ginger, and soy sauce. Serves 4. (See page 100 for hard-to-find ingredients.)

1

2 Udon with Dashi

Dashi, a stock made from dried fish and seaweed, is the classic base for udon soup. Cut off and discard the heads from 8 medium Japanese-style dried anchovies, called iriko. Drop fish into a small pot. Next, wipe off two 2" x 15" pieces of kombu (dried seaweed used for soups) with a damp towel and cut each piece into quarters. Put the kombu into the same pot as the iriko and pour in 6 cups cold water. Place pot over high heat. Just before the water comes to a boil, fish out the iriko and kombu using tongs. Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ lightly packed cup katsuobushi (dried bonito flakes) into pot. Cover pot, remove from heat, and let bonito steep for 4 minutes. Strain liquid and season with sea salt to taste. You will have about 5 cups. To serve, pour hot dashi over bowls of cooked noodles and sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds and finely sliced scallions. Serves 4. (See page 100 for hard-to-find ingredients.)

2

3 Udon with Soft-Boiled-Egg Tempura

A specialty of the Chikusei udon shop in the city of Takamatsu is its tempura made of soft-boiled eggs. Put 4 eggs into a pot, cover them with water, and bring to a boil. Boil eggs for 3 minutes. Chill the eggs in a bowl of ice water; carefully peel away the shells. Pour enough canola oil into a large pot that it reaches a depth of 2" and heat it over medium-high heat to 350°. Make a tempura batter by stirring together 1 cup cake flour and 3 tbsp. cornstarch in a bowl. In another bowl, whisk together 1 egg with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plus 2 tbsp. ice-cold water. Pour the liquid into the flour mixture and stir briefly with a fork. The batter should be a combination of dry and wet lumps; it's important not to overmix. Gently roll the soft-boiled eggs in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cake flour, then dip them in the batter. Fry the eggs, turning occasionally, until just golden and crunchy, about 3 minutes. Serve the eggs on top of udon noodles bathed with a few tablespoons dashi and sprinkled with sliced scallions and the crisp tempura-batter flakes called tenkatsu (see page 100 for a source). Serves 4.

3

UDON



From left, a cook in the kitchen of Waraya, a restaurant in the suburbs of Takamatsu that serves tarai-style udon; fresh, handmade udon noodles served with raw egg and soy sauce, two classic accompaniments.

driver, who wears an official-looking cap and white gloves, gets out and bows as several giggly young women pour out of the backseat. Attached to the vehicle's roof is a large, red plastic replica of a bowl of udon, indicating that this is an udon taxi, of the sort that devotees typically hire for a tour of the city's best restaurants. The girls duck into the *udon-ya*, and I follow them inside.

It's only 11 o'clock, but the place is already packed with hungry patrons. Under fluorescent lights, a line of customers forms alongside the window that separates the noisy dining room from a prep area, where the udon master Keiji Takeda presides. A wiry man with close-cropped hair and fingers covered with dough, he wears a spotless white T-shirt and apron. A polka-dot *hachimaki* (headband) is tied around his brow. He is rolling out dough by hand with a three-foot wood dowel.

Chikusei is self-serve. After collecting boiled noodles from the checkout counter, patrons may eat them cold or move to the *udon-ya* version of a fixings bar, where they can reheat individual portions in a hot-water bath and add traditional toppings—scallions, toasted sesame seeds, shichimi togarashi (a chile-based condiment)—to their ceramic bowl. Takeda also makes a delicate dashi, or broth, with seaweed from Hokkaido, bonito flakes, and iriko, a Japanese dried anchovy. As the crowd sits elbow to

elbow at long wooden tables, Takeda takes a break from grating ginger (another popular topping); he tells me that he has been making udon for 23 years, having started out as an apprentice to his father-in-law. Every morning he rises before dawn to mix a raw dough of water, sea salt, and wheat flour.

In a tiny fry station by the entrance, his wife, Emi, her hair tucked under a tan camouflage scarf, stands over a vat of spitting vegetable oil, dipping slices of eggplant and pressed fish cake into a large bowl of batter, flicking the excess off her fingers, her cheeks flushed from the heat. I watch while she dunks a soft-boiled egg in the hot oil until it develops a golden crust. I pierce the crunchy outer coating with my chopsticks, and the yolk oozes over a nest of her husband's noodles. Grasping the strands between chopsticks, I suck the noodles into my mouth. They are firm and slick, with a hint of brine.

In the late afternoon, I head to a restaurant called Waraya, in a suburban neighborhood of Takamatsu, where the specialty is tarai udon, a style in which the noodles are served in a communal wooden receptacle resembling a washtub. The restaurant occupies a 19th-century farmhouse attached to an outdoor museum of early rural architecture that reminds me of Colonial Williamsburg. Log tables overlook a pine grove through rice-paper windows.

At one of the tables I meet eight students from

UDON IN THE BAG

Udon has recently begun to receive the type of adulation that the Japanese have traditionally reserved for soba, its slender buckwheat-flour cousin. If you don't have the time to make your own udon from scratch (see page 60) and can't make it to Japan to taste it at one of that country's many *udon-ya*, or udon counter joints, don't lose heart. Many varieties of imported, packaged udon noodles can be bought at Japanese food stores around the United States; we found that, as a general rule, the quality of the prepackaged udon we tried increased in direct proportion to the price. Among the best-loved styles of the noodle in Japan is the sanuki udon, which is a specialty of Kagawa Prefecture and has a deliciously chewy texture; of the different brands of dried sanuki udon we tried, those from Kawata

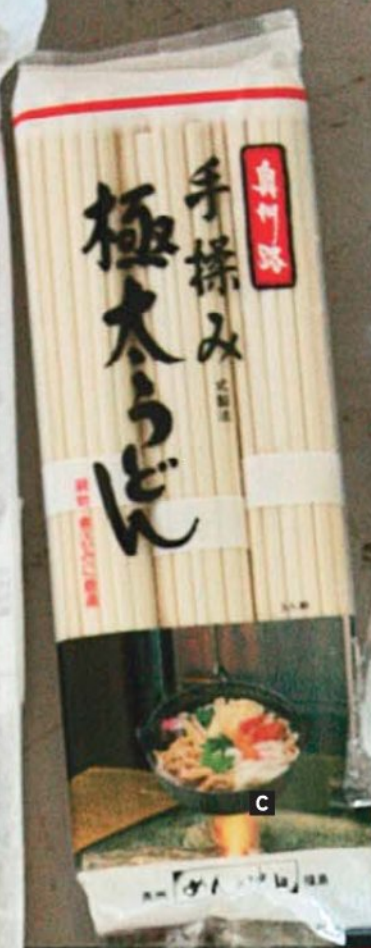
A and Nishimoto Trading Company **F** had the best balance of flavor and a pleasingly dense texture. Another style of the noodle available dried in the United States is Akita Prefecture's prized inaniwa udon, a type that becomes glossy and nearly transparent when cooked and has a firm, silky texture; we found those from Sanwa Trading Company **B** to be particularly appealing. A number of styles of udon are classified by their appearance rather than by their region of origin. Of those available in dried form, extra-thick gokubuto udon, a popular choice for adding to long-simmered soups, is one of our favorites, especially the noodles made by Ikeda **C**. You can also find ramen-style precooked udon **D**, which is sold with a spice packet and, predictably, emphasizes convenience over flavor, as well as frozen, precooked udon **E**, which is thicker and softer than dried udon and is ready in a minute or two. A relative newcomer to the packaged-udon market is a variety called hannama, or semifresh **G**, which has an especially pliant, chewy consistency. (See page 100 for sources.) —Georgia Freedman and Hiroko Shimbo



A



B



C



D



E



F



G

UDON

FRESH UDON



1 | In a bowl, stir together $\frac{2}{3}$ cup plus 2 tbsp. warm water and 1 tbsp. kosher salt. Put 3 cups udon flour (see page 100) into another bowl; pour in water. Stir until crumbly and form into a ball. Seal dough in a plastic bag; let rest for 30 minutes. Knead dough until smooth, about 15 minutes.



2 | Roll dough out to a thickness of $\frac{1}{8}$ ". Sprinkle liberally with flour.



3 | Gently fold the dough into pleats, making 4 or 5 folds.



4 | Cut the dough into $\frac{1}{4}$ "-thick ribbons. Dust with flour; cook noodles (see cold udon recipe, page 57). Makes about 1 lb. This recipe is based on one in *At Home with Japanese Cooking* by Elizabeth Andoh (Knopf, 1980).



Tomie Nakajima harvesting negi, a green onion, which she sells to Rumiko Ikegami's udon shop in Takamatsu.

a nearby agricultural university who are slurping noodles. They tell me they are conducting an udon tour to research wheat products—at least, that's what they're apparently saying to anyone who asks. When I offer to buy a second serving, they eagerly show me how to shred fresh ginger using a wickedly sharp hand grater. I follow their lead as they expertly haul long noodles out of the tub, dropping them into individual bowls before adding a light, unpasteurized soy-and-wheat-based dipping sauce known as tsukedashi. Sipping draft ale, I listen to my boisterous new advisers passionately expound between mouthfuls on the gluten content of various types of wheat flour.

THE FIRST GRAPHIC DEPICTION of a tarai-style udon dining hall like Waraya is to be found on a 300-year-old folding screen at Kotohira-gu Shrine, in western Kagawa. In a series of black-and-tan drawings, three thatched-roof *udon-ya* tempt attendees at an outdoor festival. Now sanuki udon has its own festival day (July 2), which kicks off with a noodle consecration ceremony at one of Takamatsu's major shrines. My own conversion takes place early the next morning when I meet Rumiko Ikegami, a backyard entrepreneur and also the city's unofficial godmother of udon.

A transplant by marriage to Kagawa Prefecture, this tiny, hunched woman in her 70s has been

making udon for almost 50 years. Wearing a pair of bedroom slippers, she shuffles through the one-room noodle factory attached to the back of her house in a residential neighborhood of narrow lanes and kitchen gardens. The shack is crammed with cooking equipment, sacks of flour, and a collection of Winnie-the-Pooh toys. I notice a colorful poster for *Udon*, the movie, taped to a wall; it depicts a queue of hungry customers zigzagging off toward a distant horizon.

Just before sunrise, four apprentices are already mixing flour and water in large steel pans. Ikegami tells me that after waking she always goes outside to gauge the weather. "Dough is affected by temperature," she says. "If it's sunny or rainy, I have to add salt or water accordingly." This practice is known to sanuki udon noodle makers as *dosankanroku*, a flexible dough-making formula that produces firm, delectable noodles year-round.

Once it forms, the dough is laid beneath a plastic sheet on a steel platform, where Ikegami's staff proceed to stamp on it gently with their bare feet. Ikegami then weighs the dough and cuts and shapes it into six cantaloupe-size balls. The individual dough balls are stamped on once more, stacked, and then left, covered in plastic, to rest on wooden shelves. Finally, the pancake-shaped masses of dough are transferred to a wooden worktable dusted with flour; there they are rolled thin to be cut into

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UDON

わらふ	
釜あげうどん	410円
中ジャンボ	680円
特大うどん	900円
家族うどん	2300円
ざるうどん	410円
ざるうどん大	680円
生しょうゆうどん	410円
生しょうゆうどん大	680円
天ぷら	1100円
ビール 大瓶	600円
地ビール	450円



From left, the menu at Waraya; the condiments table at Rumiko Ikegami's udon shop, housed in a shed next to her home in Takamatsu. Demand has since forced Ikegami to relocate to a more spacious venue.

noodles. When I climb up on the platform and try to knead the dough myself, Ikegami chuckles. "Your feet are too tiny!" she announces. My piece comes out lumpy and misshapen. "Every moment I touch the dough, I can tell the texture and what needs adjusting," says Ikegami. "If you fail at this first step, the noodles are no good."

As the crew clears away the prep equipment and sets up for cooking, a gray-haired, bespectacled woman named Tomie Nakajima arrives with an armload of negi, a long green onion, from her farm outside the city. She sells her entire crop to Ikegami, who prefers this larger, more pungent onion to the conventional scallions used in many other udon shops in town. It's barely ten o'clock, and customers are already streaming in. On a busy Saturday, Ikegami receives more than a thousand customers. Not everyone in the neighborhood is thrilled with her success; opposite the shed, a private yard is cordoned off with handwritten signs requesting patrons to keep off the grass.

Ikegami can barely keep up with the orders. Customers squeeze through the shed to pick up bowls, collect their udon, and top it with a raw egg, soy sauce, or other condiments. Most stand outside to eat, while others sit at

dented steel desks under a tent Ikegami has set up adjacent to her shed. I choose thin-sliced negi and a piece of sweet-potato tempura to add to my bowl. Ikegami's noodles are softer and more flavorful than those I ate at Chikusei, the downtown udon-ya, and hardly need the embellishment. A three-year-old girl in ponytails named Hina sits next to me on a bench. She says she eats udon every day. When I ask what kind she likes the best, she just points to her bowl. No toppings, no dashi; just chewy noodles to fill a little girl's tummy.

Ikegami also sells uncooked noodles to take away. I buy two boxes. On my return to Tokyo later that day, I present them to my friends, along with refrigerator magnet figurines of Taro, Udon's cartoon movie mascot, who wears a noodle bowl on his head. Naturally, the fresh sanuki noodles are a hit. So, when my friends politely ask how much I like udon now, I can't resist. "Oodles," I answer. 🍜

THE PANTRY, page 100: Sources for seven-spice blend, dried anchovies, dried seaweed, bonito flakes, dried toasted sesame seeds, tempura flakes, packaged udon, and udon flour.



THE GUIDE

TAKAMATSU, JAPAN

COUNTRY CODE: 81

Dinner for two with drinks and tip:

EXPENSIVE Over \$70

MODERATE \$7-\$69

INEXPENSIVE Under \$6

WHERE TO STAY

AUBERGE DE OISHI 65 Yashima-nishimachi, Takamatsu (087/43-2235; www.auberge-de-oishi.jp). Rates: \$320 double. This contemporary villa on a sandy beach near Yashima Plateau has five comfortable suites. In his restaurant opposite the inn (expensive), chef Masakuni Oishi serves French-Japanese fusion cuisine in a minimalist dining pavilion and garden.

WHERE TO EAT

CHIKUSEI 2-23 Kameoka-cho, Takamatsu (087/834-7296). Lunch only. Closed Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday. Inexpensive. At this bustling, unpretentious udon-ya, udon master Keiji Takeda prepares classic sanuki-style udon.

IKEGAMI Takasu 899-1 Kawa-higashi-shita, Takamatsu (087/879-2204). Inexpensive. Rumiko Ikegami's hugely popular noodle shop has recently relocated to a parking lot near the airport to accommodate the crowds better.

KANAIZUMI 9-3 Konyamachi, Takamatsu (087/822-0123). Inexpensive. This popular cafeteria, near the city's art museum, also specializes in sanuki udon.

WARAYA 91 Yashima-nakamachi, Takamatsu (087/843-3115). Moderate. Housed in a 19th-century farmhouse, this eatery offers tarai-style udon—noodles served in a communal wood tub.

TASTE PERFECTION



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TABLE

After they talk callers through their kitchen crises, the team behind one of America's most loved radio food shows sit down to their own, eventful Thanksgiving feast

By LYNNE ROSSETTO KASPER and SALLY SWIFT ■ Photographs by LARRY NIGHSWANDER

SPLENDID TABLE

AS WE HELP CALLERS PUT OUT THEIR KITCHEN FIRES, WE'VE GOT A FEW BLAZES OF OUR OWN IN THE MAKING

THANKSGIVING IS OUR FAVORITE day of the year, for the simple reason that at no other time is there such an urgent intersection between what the listeners of our radio show, *The Splendid Table*, want and what we can give them. Normally, our weekly program is taped, offering those who tune in a nicely polished, one-hour package of informative talk about food in nearly all its guises. But our annual Thanksgiving broadcast, "Turkey Confidential", is live, seat-of-the-pants radio. On the one day when America cooks the most, listeners phone in from across the country, and we do our best to answer their questions. Some calls are from panicked first-timers who have realized midmorning that they don't own a roasting pan or even a functioning oven. Others are from

world-weary cooks longing for inspiration—like the trucker who called, desperate for a new gravy recipe to go with the turkey breast that was roasting in a specially designed oven under his seat. Still others come from well-intentioned experimenters whom we coax from the brink of disaster: a couple of years ago, for example, Lynne prevented a potential family-wide gastrointestinal calamity by persuading a caller to throw out a turkey that had been sitting in a room-temperature brine in the garage for two days.

What the world doesn't know is that, just as we're helping callers put out their kitchen fires, we have a feast and, possibly, a few blazes of our own in the making. The two of us have been working together for the past 15 years, and much of our crew has been with us almost as long. We've become one another's extended family, and spending the holiday together has come to feel like the natural thing to do. So, after

LYNNE ROSSETTO KASPER is the host and SALLY SWIFT is the managing producer of *The Splendid Table*, a weekly, national radio show produced by American Public Media. Their book *The Splendid Table's How to Eat Supper* will be published by Clarkson Potter in 2008.

Lynne Rossetto Kasper (at left) and Sally Swift in the studio, below. Previous pages, the Thanksgiving bounty at Swift's house.



RECIPE

Yams with Ginger and Scallions

SERVES 8

"Thai influences always show up in our Thanksgiving menus because we love the flavors," says Rossetto Kasper. In this dish (facing page), the kick of chile, ginger, and lime offers a welcome counterpoint to the rich, rounded flavors of other Thanksgiving fare.

- 4 large yams (3½–4 lbs.), peeled and cut into thick rounds
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 6 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 16 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 8 large shallots, thinly sliced
- 8 scallions, cut crosswise into 1" pieces
- 4 jalapeños, cored, seeded, and thinly sliced
- 1 5" piece ginger, peeled and cut into paper-thin matchsticks
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 lightly packed cups basil leaves, coarsely chopped
- 6 tbsp. fresh lime juice

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add yams and cook until tender, 8–10 minutes. Drain yams in a colander and transfer to a large shallow serving dish. Return pot to the stovetop.

2. Heat oil in the pot over medium-high heat. Add the garlic, shallots, scallions, jalapeños, ginger, and salt and pepper. Cook, stirring often, until fragrant, 1–2 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until ginger has softened, 15–20 minutes.

3. Stir the basil into the ginger mixture; cook, uncovered, until basil has softened and released its fragrance (but not lost its bright color), about 30 seconds. Spoon the ginger-basil mixture over the yams. Season with salt and pepper. Right before serving, drizzle the lime juice over the top.



SPLENDID TABLE

AFTER THE SHOW, WE TRAVEL—LITERALLY—OVER THE RIVER AND THROUGH THE WOODS TO SALLY'S HOUSE

we've taken the last call and left the studio on Thanksgiving Day, all of us go to our respective homes in and around St. Paul, Minnesota, where our radio show is based, to gather our kids, spouses, friends, and pets and then travel—literally, as it happens—over the river and through the woods to Sally's house, in the lovely village of Marine on St. Croix, 40 minutes northeast of the Twin Cities. Sally's place has become Thanksgiving central because it's kidproof, has an intrinsically hang-out-friendly quality, and, most important, has unenforced fire restrictions that allow post-feast bonfires in the backyard.

You'd think our experience in solving other folks' problems on the air would translate into smooth sailing in our own kitchens, but despite planning that begins weeks in advance, the real world has a way of creeping into our feast, bringing all sorts of surprises.

8:30 A.M., THREE WEEKS BEFORE THANKSGIVING, LYNNE'S HOUSE Lynne's annual bacchanal of turkey-recipe testing—intended to find, for the

sake of our listeners and to satisfy our own curiosity, the ultimate new method for cooking holiday fowl—began several days and 14 birds ago. With a scientific rigor that would impress Charles Darwin, Lynne has arrived at the definitive brine (a combination of salt, sugar, ancho chiles, tart apples, and other flavorings), the definitive cooking temperature (higher than that called for in most recipes, so the skin crisps and the flesh stays juicy), and the *(continued on page 74)*

RECIPE

Broccoli with Sicilian Sauce

SERVES 8

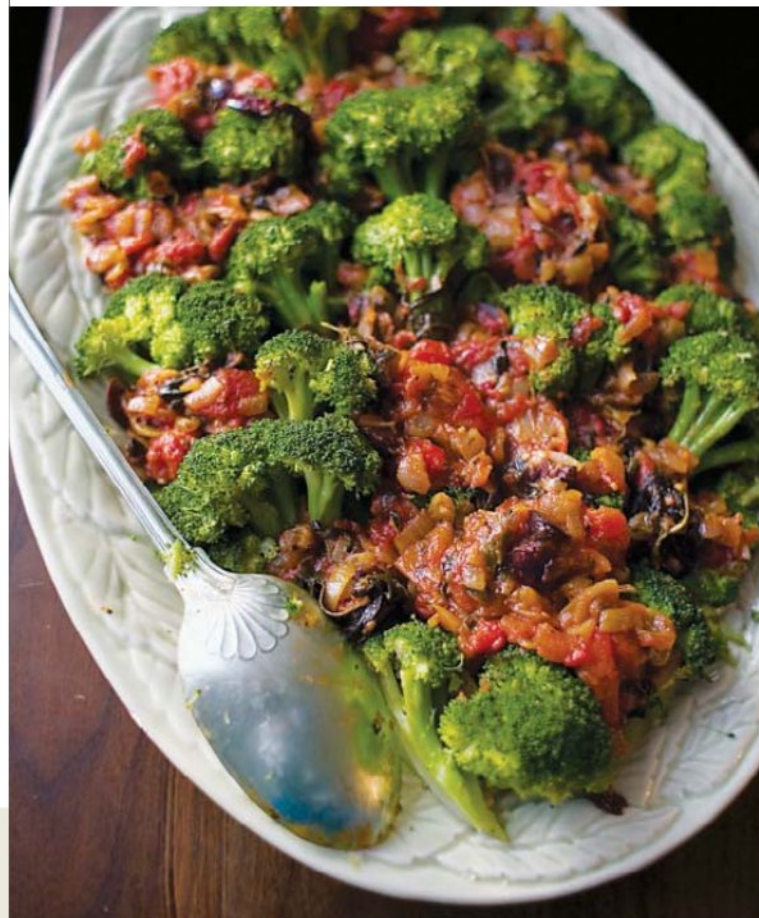
"For me, Thanksgiving isn't a holiday unless there is some piece of Italy on the table," says Rossetto Kasper. "No region does tomato sauces like Sicily, and this sauce, which straddles the line between a pasta sauce and vegetable dressing, is intensely delicious, with its mass of sautéed onions, its reduction of wine, vinegar, garlic, and tomato, and its near-to-Arabic finish of olives, raisins, and pine nuts."

- 2 heads broccoli (about 2½ lbs.), cut into florets
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 sprigs flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
- 3 medium red onions, thinly sliced
- ½ cup dry red wine
- 2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 heaping tbsp. tomato paste
- ½ tsp. dried oregano
- ⅛ tsp. red pepper flakes
- 3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes (with liquid), crushed
- ⅓ cup pitted black Sicilian olives
- ⅓ cup seedless raisins
- ⅓ cup pine nuts, toasted (optional)

1. Set a collapsible steamer in the bottom of a tall pot. Add enough water to just cover the steamer. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Lay broccoli in a crosshatch pattern in steamer and steam, covered, until tender, 6–8 minutes. Transfer broccoli to a serving dish and season with salt. Set aside at room temperature.

2. Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the parsley and onions, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring often, until onions are softened and browned, 10–15 minutes. Add the wine, vinegar, tomato paste, oregano, pepper flakes, and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until the mixture is reduced to a glaze, 4–5 minutes. Stir in the tomatoes with their liquid and bring the sauce to a boil. Lower the heat to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, stirring occasionally, until somewhat thick, 8–10 minutes. Add the olives and simmer until sauce thickens further, about 10 minutes more. Stir in the raisins. Spoon the tomato sauce over room-temperature broccoli and sprinkle with the pine nuts, if you like. (The sauce may be made up to 3 days in advance and refrigerated.)

Broccoli with Sicilian sauce, below. Facing page, crisp apple-scented roast turkey (the recipe appears on page 71).







SPLENDID TABLE

THE PERFECT BIRD

Crisp Apple-Scented Roast Turkey with Cider-Calvados Gravy

SERVES 8-10

The turkey in this recipe, from Lynne Rossetto Kasper, is deeply infused with the aroma of apples. "I'm a great believer in repeating seasoning themes at different stages of cooking to build depth," she says, "which is why I use several expressions of apple—the fruit itself, cider, and apple brandy—in this recipe." The seasoning that goes into the brine may seem like a lot, with its one-third cup chile powder, three heads of garlic, four apples, and two quarts of cider, but the final effect is perfectly balanced.

1 | The broth for the gravy may be made up to 3 days in advance. Lightly coat the bottom of a 12" skillet with extra-virgin olive oil and heat over medium-high. Add the **neck and giblets** from a **10-12-lb. turkey** and **2 lbs. mixed chicken legs and thighs**; season to taste with **kosher salt** and **freshly ground black pepper**. Brown on both sides; transfer to a 6-quart pot. Pour half of the fat out of the skillet; heat over medium-high. Stir in **2 chopped yellow onions**, **2 cloves crushed garlic**, **2 whole cloves**, **1 chopped carrot**, and **1 chopped celery rib with leaves** and cook until just browned, 12-14 minutes. Remove skillet from heat and add **1/4 cup calvados** (apple brandy) and **2 cups dry white wine**. Return to heat, bring to a boil, and scrape up the brown bits on the bottom of the skillet. Transfer the vegetable mixture to the 6-quart pot of meat. Add enough water to cover the mixture to a depth of 1"; bring to a slow simmer. Partially cover and cook, without stirring, for 4-5 hours. (Add more water as necessary to keep solids covered.) Remove from heat, let cool, strain (as shown), and refrigerate broth. You should have about 12 cups.

2 | A day before serving, brine the 10-12-lb. turkey, calculating 1 hour of brining for each pound. In a large plastic brining bag (see page 100) or stockpot, combine **1 cup kosher salt**, **1/3 packed cup dark brown sugar**, and **1/3 cup ground ancho chile powder**. Put **2 cups fresh apple cider**, **35 cloves garlic**, and **4 unpeeled, cored, and coarsely chopped granny smith apples** into a food processor and purée. Add purée to the brining bag along with **6 cups apple cider** and **4 quarts cold water**. Whisk (as shown) to dissolve the salt and sugar.

3 | Put turkey into brining bag (as shown). The turkey must be kept cold (brine should be 33°), so refrigerate it or bury the bag in ice in an oversize cooler, adding ice as necessary. Before cooking, bring the turkey close to room temperature for the shortest roasting time. (Calculate 10 minutes' roasting time per pound.)

4 | Remove the oven's center rack and arrange the remaining rack as low as possible. Heat oven to 450°. Choose a large shallow roasting pan, ideally 2" deep; if the pan is too deep, the turkey will steam instead of roasting. In the pan, cluster together **3 large celery ribs halved crosswise**, **3 large carrots halved crosswise**, and **3 large yellow onions cut into thick rounds** so that the vegetables become a sturdy rack for the turkey. Scatter **1 unpeeled, cored, and coarsely chopped granny smith apple** and **11/2 lightly packed cups fresh basil leaves** over the top (as shown). Add **4 cups dry white wine** to cover the bottom of the pan with 1/2" of liquid.

5 | Remove the turkey from the brine and pat it dry with paper towels. Set the turkey on the vegetables breast down (a technique that draws juices down into the breast while also protecting the meat from the heat) and tuck **1 unpeeled, cored, and coarsely chopped granny smith apple** and **1/2 lightly packed cup fresh basil leaves** into the cavity. Dot the turkey with **4 tbsp. softened butter** (as shown) and dust all over with **1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper**. Begin roasting.

6 | As the bird cooks, baste it with the pan juices every 20 minutes using a spoon (as shown). After the first hour, remove the roasting pan from oven and, using two pot holders, carefully turn the turkey breast side up. Baste it with the pan juices and continue roasting. (Cover the turkey loosely with foil if it threatens to burn.) When an instant-read thermometer inserted in a thigh (without touching bone) reaches 165°-170° (after about 2 hours), move the turkey to a platter and let it rest in a warm place for 20 minutes.

7 | Meanwhile, set the roasting pan over 2 burners to make the gravy. Skim off excess fat from pan juices and remove two-thirds of the vegetables from the pan. Cut the rest of the vegetables into small pieces (as shown). Add **1/3 cup calvados** (apple brandy), **1/2 cup white wine**, and **1/3 cup apple cider**. Bring to a boil over high heat and, using a wooden spatula to scrape up all the caramelized bits, cook the liquid down to a syrup, 6-8 minutes.

8 | Remove broth from refrigerator; skim off fat. Reheat all but 1 cup. Add two-thirds of the heated broth to the pan (as shown). Boil, stirring constantly, until reduced by half, about 15 minutes. Stir the remainder of the heated broth into the pan and bring to a boil. To thicken the gravy, add **1/4 cup flour** to a tall glass. Stir the 1 cup of reserved, chilled broth into the flour until there are no lumps. You've made a slurry. Whisk it into the bubbling gravy. Keep simmering and whisking until gravy is smooth and thick enough to lightly coat the back of a spoon, about 20 minutes. Now taste it. If you taste raw flour, simmer the gravy for another minute.

9 | Stir **8 torn basil leaves** into the gravy and season with **kosher salt** and **freshly ground black pepper**, if necessary. Pour the gravy into a bowl (as shown) or another serving vessel. Carve the turkey (shown on page 69) and arrange on a large platter. Serve with the gravy passed separately.





SPLENDID TABLE

WHEN THE PHONE LINES START LIGHTING UP, WE CAN FEEL THE PULSE OF AMERICA'S KITCHENS QUICKEN

(continued from page 68) definitive pan gravy (made with stock, apple cider, and calvados, for a richer foundation).

8:13 P.M., THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING, SALLY'S HOUSE Sally removes the turkey, which she's had delivered from her local mom-and-pop grocer, from the paper bag. Horror sets in. This is not the locally raised heritage-breed bird she'd asked for but, rather, a supermarket specimen—the kind that's fully injected with all the things Lynne constantly rails against on the air. Always decisive, Sally quickly unwraps the bird, plucks out the telltale plastic thermometer, plunges the turkey into Lynne's brine, and does not tell a soul.

7:59 A.M., THANKSGIVING DAY, LYNNE'S HOUSE Lynne is frantically stuffing and labeling Ziploc bags containing the ingredients for the dishes she'll be making. Vegetables and spices are flying everywhere. Her husband, Frank, stands quietly aside. He's seen this before.

8:13 A.M., THANKSGIVING DAY, SALLY'S HOUSE Sally's husband, Tom, is standing before his oven, sweating nervously. This year, he's been put in charge of the turkey, and the moment has come to put flame to fowl. It's unusual to find Tom, an accomplished audio producer who is used to dealing with crises on the fly, daunted by a mere bird. He places the turkey in the oven—upside down.

9:01 A.M., AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA STUDIO 4B In the production booth, *Splendid Table* producers and interns, under Sally's direction, are screening the first callers while Lynne introduces the show. The phone lines light up, and we can feel the pulse of America's home kitchens quicken as the holiday gets under way. Our first call is from Christopher Kimball, the editor of *Cook's Illustrated* magazine and a frequent guest on the show, who will stay on the line to help us answer callers' questions from his home in Vermont.

9:20 A.M., SALLY'S HOUSE Tom opens the oven and realizes that the bird has been breast side down for over an hour. He considers calling Sally but decides to take matters, truly, into his own hands, flipping the bird over and tearing its skin in the process.

Previous pages, cardamom-buttermilk pie; the St. Croix River, across from Swift's house; family and friends gather in Swift's kitchen for the pre-feast Thanksgiving toast.

9:24 A.M., AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA STUDIO 4B Mary is on the line from St. Cloud, Minnesota. She's laughing. The exchange goes something like this:

"I have a turkey in the oven, a tofurkey on the counter,

RECIPE

Cardamom-Buttermilk Pie

MAKES ONE 10" PIE

Buttermilk pie, an American classic, is a forerunner of cheesecake. Real, old-fashioned buttermilk is the liquid left over from the churning of ripened cream for butter; it has a tangier, more complex flavor than the version found in stores today. In this recipe, sour cream helps replicate the taste of true buttermilk.

- 1½ cups plus 3 tbsp. flour
- 1 tbsp. plus 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp. fine salt
- 14 tbsp. butter (10 tbsp. cold, 4 tbsp. melted and cooled slightly)
- 2 tsp. white distilled vinegar
- 1 tsp. ground cardamom
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 cups buttermilk
- Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice

1. Combine 1½ cups flour, 1 tbsp. sugar, ¼ tsp. salt, and cold butter in a sealable plastic bag and freeze completely. (This may be done up to 3 months in advance.)

2. Mix vinegar and ½ cup ice water in a bowl. Turn the freezer bag's contents out into a food processor; pulse until chunks of the butter have been reduced to the size of large peas. Add vinegar mixture to flour mixture and pulse briefly to just incorporate. Form the dough into a disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.

3. On a well-floured surface, roll dough out to a 13" circle about ⅛" thick. Fit into a 10" pie pan; cut away excess dough, leaving a 1½" border. Tuck the overhanging dough underneath itself to form a thick edge; using your fingers, pinch the edge to create a wavy pattern. Cover and chill for 1 hour.

4. Heat oven to 400°. Prick bottom of dough with a fork; line with foil and fill with dried beans. Bake the pie shell for 10 minutes. Remove the beans and foil and bake until light brown, about 10 minutes more. Let cool on a rack.

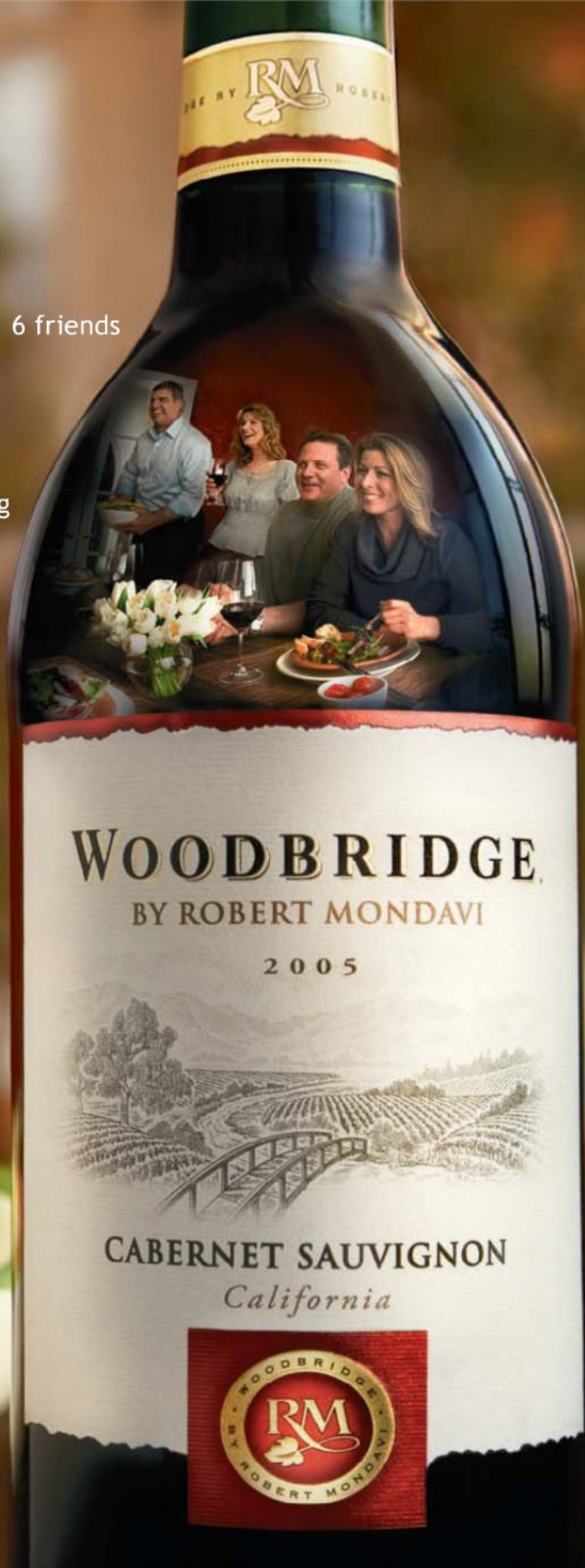
5. Whisk together remaining flour and salt with the melted butter, cardamom, egg yolks, and sour cream; beat in remaining sugar, buttermilk, zest, and lemon juice. Pour into cooled pie shell, place in oven, and reduce heat to 325°. Bake until set on the edges but slightly wobbly in the center, about 1 hour. Let pie cool completely on a rack and refrigerate. Serve the pie cool rather than cold.

6 friends

Any Tuesday evening

2 hours enjoying the conversation

1 bottle of



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MAKE EVERY DAY A LITTLE LESS EVERYDAY

WOODBIDGE.
BY ROBERT MONDAVI

SPLENDID TABLE

AT THANKSGIVING EVERY YEAR, PERSONAL CONNECTIONS SHIFT AND NEW ONES TAKE ROOT

and two vegans asleep in the basement. My question is can I use butter in the mashed potatoes instead of that nonhydrogenated, animal-free, natural buttery spread they brought home? Will they ever know?"

"Ugh," Lynne replies and then pauses. "Well, I have to go the ethical route here. That stuff may be awful, but..."

"It is," interjects Kimball. "We've tested it."

"Yeah, but it's wrong to switch on them. How would you feel?" Lynne reasons. A few minutes later, they all agree on a vegan-friendly recipe using olive oil, onions, and garlic.

10:40 A.M., AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA STUDIO 4B Our regular guests on the show, the food writers Jane and Michael Stern, have phoned in to announce that they won't be hosting a dinner this year. They've decided that they have terrible Thanksgiving karma. Jane lists evidence from holidays past. There was the year the dog ate turkey fat and wound up at the vet, the time Michael's Cuisinart-happy mom pureed the turkey, and the unfortunate incident in which a hard-drinking relative tried to lure another dinner guest off the wagon.

11:00 A.M., AMERICAN PUBLIC MEDIA STUDIO 4B The phone lines officially close. Over the past two hours, Lynne has helped a cook from Fridley, Minnesota, turn a botched pumpkin pie into pumpkin pot de crème; walked a vegetarian in Omaha through the paces of roasting his very first bird for a crowd; and demystified turducken, that Southern specialty consisting of a chicken stuffed inside a duck stuffed inside a turkey, for a caller from Ann Arbor, Michigan.

2:34 P.M., SALLY'S HOUSE Sally gets home and releases Tom—who has succeeded in producing a respectable, if slightly banged-around, roasted turkey—from his kitchen responsibilities. Some guests have already showed up, and the kitchen is getting crowded, fast. The plan of having each guest bring no more than one dish has failed, as it invariably does, and the countertop is covered with a hodgepodge of old favorites, last-minute experiments, and soon-to-be standbys. Sally sets out her pear-ginger chutney and garlicky greens. Friends Bonnie and Al Porte have brought what could be called a gelée of cranberries with horseradish cream but is, at heart, a good old-fashioned molded Jell-O salad. Sally's sister Nan, a dancer and accomplished carb loader, has come with two stuffings—both a wild rice version and a classic sage version—as well as corn bread. There's glazed ham from Nueske's, the legendary smokehouse in Wisconsin, fresh cranberries, and aged cheddar cheese. And Lynne, a one-woman horn of plenty, has arrived bearing a Sicilian-style broccoli

dish, yams with ginger and scallions, cardamom-butter milk pie, and her famous homemade marshmallows.

3:32 P.M. All family and friends are accounted for, glasses are in hand, and dogs and children are romping around inside and out. We represent a wide demographic, ranging in age from two to 72 and encompassing a vast array of interests that includes art, junking, dance, SpongeBob SquarePants, philately, medicine, U2, trademark law, hairdos, English literature, and venture capital. Every year, personal connections shift and new ones take root. It's one of the aspects of this holiday we treasure the most.

4:07 P.M. Tom is standing in position before the roasted bird with a ten-inch, hand-beveled carving knife—ceremoniously handed to him by Lynne moments earlier—in his right hand. The carving of the bird is accomplished with impeccable skill and grace. His assignment fulfilled, Tom turns to clean the blade and nearly cuts off his finger, sending him, trailing blood, into the bathroom in search of first aid. A few perfunctory words of sympathy are offered by those who aren't already blithely digging in. Tom's turkey is so moist that we decide to change the recipe's instructions to make them reflect his breast-down approach.

5:11 P.M. The pace of the meal is slowing. Tom holds his bandaged hand above his head and uses the other to eat his food, which his tablemates have thoughtfully cut into bite-size pieces. Now that the eating frenzy has subsided, Tom realizes that a stitch or two may be required. His brother, Jim, pulls the car around, and the two of them head off to join the other Thanksgiving Day wounded at the local emergency room. The kids, oblivious to this minor drama, have decamped to the backyard to await the bonfire. A few of us go back for thirds.

6:15 P.M. Those of us able to move have drifted outside. A few of Sally's neighbors have joined the party. The kids play flashlight tag, climb trees, and toast Lynne's marshmallows, while we lean against one another on a bench, a bottle of wine at our feet. A cheer goes up when Tom arrives and brandishes his newly stitched finger. As the fire dwindles, we raise our glasses in a toast. Here's to next year's "Turkey Confidential" and to tomorrow, when Sally will find those marshmallows happily tracked by little feet through the entire house. 

THE PANTRY, page 100: Information on The Splendid Table and sources for ground ancho chile and brining bags. See www.saveur.com/issue106 for more holiday recipes.

elegant



Pros Magaga and her daughter tend their newly-expanded shop in Kampala, Uganda

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Sweet Leaf

Lush, earthy, strictly seasonal: cavolo nero is a green worth waiting for

BY INDRANI SEN PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDRÉ BARANOWSKI





CAVOLO NERO

METHODS

Cavolo Nero Salad with Pecorino Rossellino

This dish (previous page, bottom) is based on one made by chef Joshua McFadden at Franny's, an Italian restaurant in Brooklyn, New York. Heat oven to 400°. Toss 1 cup coarse fresh bread crumbs with 2 tbsp. melted butter and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste; bake on a baking sheet until golden, 5–7 minutes. Let cool. Sprinkle a little kosher salt over 1 chopped clove garlic; mash with the side of a knife to make a paste; transfer to a bowl. Whisk in 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, preferably Frantoia (see page 100), 2 tbsp. lemon juice, 1/8 tsp. red pepper flakes, and salt and pepper to taste. Stir in 1/4 cup grated pecorino cheese, preferably pecorino rossellino (a sweet-tasting, tomato-coated variety; see page 100), to make a dressing. Add 1 lb. trimmed and thinly sliced cavolo nero; toss. Serve sprinkled generously with the bread crumbs, more grated pecorino, and a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil. Serves 4.

Ribollita

(Cavolo Nero and Borlotti Bean Soup)

This recipe for the classic Tuscan soup (previous page, top) is based on one in *The River Cafe Cook Book* by Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers (Ebury Press, 1995). Heat 1/4 cup olive oil in a pot over medium-high heat. Add 1/2 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves, 6 chopped ribs celery, 4 chopped cloves garlic, 3 chopped carrots, 1 chopped red onion, and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Cook, stirring, until light brown, 15–20 minutes. Crush contents of one 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes; add to pot. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until thickened, 25–30 minutes. Add 2 lbs. trimmed and roughly chopped cavolo nero, 2 drained 14-oz. cans borlotti beans, and 1 gallon water. Cover; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, uncovered, until cavolo nero is tender, about 30 minutes. Meanwhile, purée 1 drained 14-oz. can borlotti beans and 1/2 cup water in a food processor; stir into pot. Tear 1 stale crustless loaf ciabatta bread (about 3/4 lb. whole) into 1" pieces; add to pot with 3 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil and salt and pepper to taste. Cook, stirring, until thick, about 30 minutes. Serve drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil. Makes 8–10 servings.

I WISH I COULD SAY that I discovered cavolo nero on a ramble through Tuscany. In fact, my introduction to this rugged-looking, dark green kale was rather less romantic. I found it in the pages of a book.

I was at university in England, and my stepmother had given me a copy of *The River Cafe Cook Book*, the landmark London restaurant's now famous 1995 volume on rustic Italian cooking, for my student digs. The recipes seemed to possess a kind of magic: even with my battered pans and tiny stove, every one that I tried came out tasting bright and delicious. But there were a few dishes I didn't attempt, because they called for the mysterious Tuscan "black cabbage", cavolo nero. In the book's photographs, the kale's inky-green leaves curled around pale spines. It looked jagged and prehistoric, totally unlike the perfectly round heads of cabbage at my supermarket. Over time, cavolo nero acquired an almost mythical allure—mythical in that, try as I might, I couldn't get my hands on it. I remember scouring the market stands, only to be greeted with bewildered shrugs and offers of savory cabbage.

As it turned out, I wasn't the only one struggling to find this elusive green. Years later, when I had the opportunity to corner the book's authors, Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers, they admitted they had smuggled a bag of seeds over from Tuscany in the late 1980s for the farmer who supplied their restaurant. They were probably the only people in Britain with access to cavolo nero at that time. Still, in their book, they declared it "essential for an authentic ribollita", the Tuscan soup of beans, bread, and tomatoes, in which the kale takes center stage with its silky texture and musky flavor. "Cavolo nero became a vegetable that people went into the greengrocers and asked for," Rose Gray told me. "Ruthie and I used to go around when we gave talks and say, 'Be demanding consumers! Say to the greengrocer, I want cavolo nero!'"

CAVOLO NERO, LIKE all kales, traces its

lineage to the ancient wild cabbages of Asia Minor and the eastern Mediterranean, which came to Europe with Celtic wanderers around 600 B.C. Cultivated in Tuscany starting in the 18th century (and perhaps even earlier), cavolo nero is prized for its bountiful growth through the lean winter months. In the United States, it's commonly known as dinosaur kale, Tuscan kale, or lacinato—where it's known at all. It's a late arrival here, introduced by chefs who have championed it in recent years.

With hardy leaves that grow as long as 15 inches, cavolo nero is a brassica in the same family as broccoli and collards; it thrives in the Northeast because it tolerates cold so well, according to Guy Jones, whose organic farm in upstate New York provides produce for Manhattan's Babbo, Picholine, and Telepan, among other restaurants. When I called him to find out how he first came across the kale, the story he told had the ring of familiarity: for Jones, as for Rogers and Gray in London, there was a fateful bag of contraband seeds. One of the chefs he supplies had brought them from Tuscany a little over a decade ago. Since then, Jones said, he's grown more cavolo nero than any other kale. Still, like many farmers, he does most of his cavolo nero business with restaurants, not home cooks. "Kale isn't an easy sell," Jones said. "Arugula's not that big a leap, but kale, that's a leap."

He has a point. It's easy to dismiss cavolo nero, in all its virtuous greenness, as the sort of rabbit food dutifully chewed by health nuts. And healthful it certainly is: it's a rich source of nutrients as well as carotenoids, pigments that have been shown to have anticarcinogenic properties. Then there's the fact that cavolo nero can make a bad impression if eaten in the wrong season; harvested before the first frost, it can taste muddy and bitter. But don't hold those traits against it. With the onset of cold weather and the breakdown of the enzyme responsible for the bitter compounds that mask the plant's sugars, the leaves reveal their delectable sweetness. Once that

INDRANI SEN's last article for *SAVEUR* was "Are You Being Served?" (August/September 2006).

Cavolo nero, facing page. Previous pages, ribollita (top) and cavolo nero salad with pecorino rossellino.



CAVOLO NERO



Braised cavolo nero (top left), farfalle with cavolo nero pesto (top right), and cavolo nero and prosciutto bruschetta.

happens, it doesn't take much—a glug of oil, the careful application of heat—to bring out their complex flavor.

Cavolo nero has a strong presence, and I often serve it braised simply—with fennel, garlic, and finely chopped anchovies—alongside rich and deeply savory ingredients, like roast pork with French green lentils. Other times, I serve the cooked leaves on toasted crusty bread topped with prosciutto, to make a full-flavored bruschetta. But my favorite way to eat it is with pasta in a pesto made with garlic and olive oil. It's a lustrous purée that coats the noodles and leaves an emerald slick of oil on the plate. To me, its taste is the very essence of green—but a deeper, more mature green than that of the tender shoots of the spring and summer.

It's a color we see precious little of at this time of year in New York City, where I now

live. The trees in Central Park are rusty red and brown; the farmers' market in Union Square is a muted tableau of orange pumpkins, purple turnips, and earth-covered potatoes. But in the late autumn and early winter, when its wrinkled leaves are at their darkest, cavolo nero comes into its glory. When I find it in those chilly months, I treasure the vegetable, appreciating it all the more because it always seems to arrive when I need it the most. And in this age of year-round convenience—when produce from far-off lands is trucked to our doorsteps and we eat hothouse tomatoes in midwinter—there's something wonderful about this stubbornly seasonal kale, which yields its sweetness only to those who will wait for it. 🍴

THE PANTRY, page 100: Sources for cavolo nero, Frantoia olive oil, and pecorino rossellino.

METHODS

Braised Cavolo Nero

The leaves of cavolo nero may be left whole when they're braised; they cook slowly into a luscious heap. Heat $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil in a wide pot over medium-high heat. Add 1 tbsp. fennel seeds, 1 tsp. red pepper flakes, 12 thinly sliced cloves garlic, and 2 finely chopped anchovy filets; cook until fragrant, 1–2 minutes. Add 1 qt. chicken stock; bring to a boil. Add whole leaves from 4 lbs. trimmed cavolo nero and kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until leaves are somewhat wilted, 4–5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-low; simmer, covered, until very tender, 40–45 minutes more. Serves 4–6.

Farfalle with Cavolo Nero Pesto

When most people think of pesto, the traditional Genoese version, made with basil and pine nuts, comes to mind. In this rendition, sweet and nutty cavolo nero replaces both of those ingredients. This recipe is based on one in *The River Cafe Cook Book* by Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers (Ebury Press, 1995). Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add $2\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. trimmed cavolo nero and 2 cloves garlic; cook until bright green, 3–4 minutes. Drain; transfer cavolo nero and garlic to a food processor; pulse to a purée. Pour in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil while pulsing to form a pesto; transfer to a bowl. Crush 2 chopped raw cloves garlic with 1 tsp. sea salt; stir into pesto with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil; add 1 lb. dried farfalle; cook until al dente, 10 minutes. Drain; add pasta to bowl of pesto. Fold in $\frac{1}{2}$ cups grated parmigiano-reggiano, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil, and salt and pepper to taste. Serves 4.

Cavolo Nero and Prosciutto Bruschetta

The word *bruschetta* comes from the Italian word *bruscare*, which means to toast. This recipe is based on one in *Italian Easy Recipes from the London River Cafe* by Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers (Clarkson Potter, 2004). Trim 2 lbs. cavolo nero; boil in salted water until completely tender, 25–30 minutes. Drain; squeeze out excess water. Transfer cavolo nero to a bowl; toss with extra-virgin olive oil, kosher salt, and freshly ground black pepper, all to taste. Grill a dozen slices of ciabatta bread until crisp and slightly charred on the corners. (Alternatively, toast bread slices over the flame of a gas burner.) Rub each bread slice with a clove of garlic; season with salt and pepper to taste and drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil. Divide warm cavolo nero between bread slices and top each with a thin slice of prosciutto. Drizzle with extra-virgin olive oil. Serves 4–6.

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A GROUP OF GRANDMOTHERS IN SPAIN'S
CATALAN REGION HAS BANDED TOGETHER TO HELP KEEP LOCAL
CULINARY TRADITIONS ALIVE

COLLECTIVE WISDOM

by Lisa Abend photographs by Penny De Los Santos

Standing in Maria Pol's spotless kitchen in the small Catalan city of Sils, in northeastern Spain, I reach for a spoon to stir the casserole warming in an old pot on the stove, but the short, 74-year-old woman at my side swats my hand away. "Not yet," says Pol. "First, you have to make it *xup-xup*." I scan my memory of Catalan culinary terms for "choop-choop" but draw a blank. Later, Pol tells me the phrase refers to the precise moment when a liquid breaks into a high simmer. Here in Catalonia, a quasi-autonomous region with its own language and a strong cultural identity, the food slang can be daunting. ¶ A little more than an hour's drive northeast of

Barcelona, Sils is a nondescript town, home to blockish apartment buildings, a sand-colored church, and a few unremarkable shops. What Sils is remarkable for is its cooks, specifically Les Avies de Sils, or the Grandmothers of Sils, a collective of a hundred or so older women (and, more recently, a handful of men)—Maria Pol is one of them—celebrated for their passionate dedication to preserving traditional regional recipes.

It all began in 1992, when a local resident named Francisco Anoro, who goes by the nickname Xicu, was looking for activities that would engage Sils's elderly citizens. When he sat down for dinner with some of the town's women to listen to their ideas, the discussion quickly turned to food, though not necessarily the food in front of them. "All they could talk about was how people used to eat," says Xicu. "'How come we never ate eggs when we were girls?' they'd ask. Or, 'Why did we cook *fideuà* [a paella-like dish] on Thursdays?'" (The answers, respectively, are that the local economy once depended on the

sale of eggs, meaning few were left over for the locals, and that there was no market in town on Thursday, so home cooks had the time to make *fideuà*, a dish that takes hours to prepare.)

Fewer than 22 people attended that first dinner, but it went off so well that the ones who were present urged Xicu to organize more get-togethers. At subsequent meals, the number of attendees grew, and at the end of the first year the women began working on a book. "They didn't see it as a cookbook," says Xicu, "but a historical exploration, an ethnography of our food." The women persuaded the municipal government to publish the tome—a compendium of local culinary history—in 1994; the authors referred to themselves as the Grandmothers of Sils.

In its earliest incarnation, the group comprised nine women. The youngest was 65 years old ("We called her 'La Niña [The Girl],'" notes Xicu). So positive was the response to their first publication that, in 1997, the collective decided to publish a straightforward cookbook of Catalan recipes; it was eventually reissued by a national publisher and became a best seller. Notoriety followed, propelled by a resurgence

in interest across Spain in the country's regional cuisines. The women were invited to cook in Madrid, they took charge of the ovens at the Hotel Palace Barcelona for a week as part of a promotional event, and they were interviewed on radio and television. Today the collective receives invitations from all over Europe to demonstrate its time-honored recipes and pass along the kind of knowledge that comes only from decades at the stove. Because some of its members do not have grandchildren, the group has changed its name from Les Avies de Sils to La Cuina a Sils, which translates literally as the Cuisine of Sils. Thanks to them, their otherwise obscure hometown has become famous as a principal repository of Catalonia's culinary memory.

EVER SINCE THE mid-1990s, when a chef named Ferran Adrià achieved global recognition for his work at El Bulli, a tiny restaurant on the

LISA ABEND's writing has appeared in *Time* and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Based in Madrid, she is currently working on a culinary guidebook to Spain.

Carmen Barrio Perez, one of the Cooks of Sils, in her kitchen in the Catalan town of the same name.

COOKS OF SILS

REAL CATALAN FOOD—THE KIND WITH ROOTS REACHING BACK TO THE MIDDLE AGES—IS EARTHIER AND RICHER THAN WHAT IS SERVED IN BARCELONA'S CUTTING-EDGE RESTAURANTS

RECIPE

Mandonguilles amb Sípia i Gambes

(Meatballs with Squid and Shrimp)

SERVES 6-8

The meatballs for this dish, a version of one from Carmen Barrio Perez, may be made up to three days in advance. Serve with crusty bread, if you like.

- 24 whole blanched almonds, toasted
- 6 cloves garlic (2 whole, 4 finely chopped)
- 3 ripe medium tomatoes, halved, seeded, flesh grated, peels discarded
- 3 1"-thick slices baguette (1 toasted)
- 1/3 cup roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. ground pork
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Olive oil (preferably Spanish; see page 100) for frying, plus 6 tbsp.
- 2 medium yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 12 large head-on shell-on shrimp
- 1 1/2 lbs. cleaned squid, cut into 3/4" slices
- 3/4 cup white wine
- 2 cups beef stock, preferably homemade
- 2/3 cup frozen peas, thawed

1. Purée almonds, whole garlic, one-third of the tomatoes, toasted bread slice, half the parsley, and 1/2 cup water in a blender to make a seasoning paste called a picada; set aside. Tear remaining bread into pieces; combine in a bowl with milk. Let soak for 15 minutes; break up bread with fingers. Add half the chopped garlic, remaining parsley, beef, pork, and salt and pepper; mix well. Shape meat mixture into 1 1/2" balls. Pour oil into a large deep skillet to a depth of 1/4" and heat over medium-high heat. Working in batches, fry meatballs, turning occasionally, until golden brown all over, 5-7 minutes per batch. Transfer to a paper towel-lined plate; set aside. Discard oil and reserve skillet.

2. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in reserved skillet over medium heat. Add remaining chopped garlic and onions; cook until golden brown, 16-18 minutes. Transfer onion mixture to a plate. Increase heat to medium-high; heat another 2 tbsp. oil. Add shrimp and cook, turning once, until almost cooked, about 2 minutes. Transfer shrimp to another plate. Heat remaining 2 tbsp. oil in skillet; add squid and cook until just cooked through, about 2 minutes. Transfer squid to a plate. Add remaining tomatoes and wine and cook, stirring occasionally, until thick, 7-8 minutes. Stir in reserved picada and onion mixture; cook for 2 minutes more. Reduce heat to medium; stir in stock, peas, meatballs, squid, and salt and pepper. Top with shrimp and cook until heated throughout, about 5 minutes more.



COOKS OF SILS

Costa Brava, Spain's northeastern coast, Catalan cuisine has been known for its creative dazzle, and the area's toques have been at the forefront of Spain's gastronomic revolution. But real Catalan food—the kind with roots reaching back to the Middle Ages—is earthier and, in many ways, richer than what is served in Barcelona's cutting-edge restaurants.

The region's prosperous merchant class has always looked outward (parts of Italy used to be under Catalan rule), and that cosmopolitan point of view is reflected in the local predilec-

tion for layered flavors and unusual combinations—such as chocolate and shellfish—that mix the sweet and the savory. Cassoles (casseroles, referred to in other parts of Spain as cazuelas) loom large in the Catalan canon, especially those that unite seafood and meat. All of them derive their deep flavor from slow cooking, which invariably involves achieving the perfect *xup-xup*, the technique that Maria Pol told me about.

Of all the foods the Cooks of Sils have championed, it is the cassoles for which they

are the most renowned. Appropriately, those dishes are the stars at the collective's annual dinner, which has been held every year since 1994 in the Sils municipal pavilion and is a far cry from those first, casual meals that the group's early members attended. Despite the frequent invitations to Italy, Germany, and beyond, the dinner remains the biggest and most anticipated event of the year for the women in the group. This year, 600 or so attendees will pay 22 euros each for an evening of eating, dancing, and merrymaking.

Preparations begin the day before. On Friday morning, a few hours before I get my cooking lesson in Pol's kitchen, I accompany her to the outdoor market, near the center of town; it is bustling with women greeting one another warmly while furtively eyeing other shoppers' purchases. Pol pulls me and her friend Paquita Rabassa over to one of the produce stands, offering expert advice as she makes one careful purchase after another. Regarding the tomatoes: "For frying, they have to be ripe." As for the onions: "You want the ones from Figueres—they're sweeter and more tender." The salsify that will star in her casserole receives particularly intense scrutiny; brushing a little dirt off the pale brown roots, she remarks with satisfaction on their origin. "You can't get these outside Gerona Province. Even in Barcelona they don't have them."

After stops at a poultry vendor and then a wine shop, the three of us are back in Pol's kitchen, boiling salsify. With an unhurried rhythm, we wash, peel, and slice the root before boiling it. Then we dip the slices in flour, fry them, and set them aside to add to the casserole. Next we make a sofregit, or flavor base, of grated onion and tomato, followed by a broth made from carrots and the chicken's neck and feet. Finally, there's the picada, a paste of almonds, garlic, and parsley added at the last minute to boost the dish's flavor and thicken the sauce. For hers, Pol picks a single sprig of parsley from her garden—not enough, according to Rabassa. The two women heatedly debate the merits of one sprig versus two. In the end, Rabassa surrenders. "Everyone does it her own way," she says with a shrug.

That's the thing about the Cooks of Sils. All employ the same techniques—make a sofregit, add broth, let it *xup-xup*, stir in the picada—but the variations are virtually numberless. Before the Saturday night dinner, I'm able to squeeze in visits to the kitchens of a few other Cooks of Sils,



Clockwise from far left: meatballs with squid and shrimp; cook Rosa Valls; at the Sils annual dinner.

COOKS OF SILS

TO REACH THE PERFECT SIMMER, KNOWN AS *XUP-XUP*, IS ONE OF TRADITIONAL CATALAN COOKING'S BASIC COMMANDMENTS AND IS ESSENTIAL TO THE DEEP FLAVOR OF REGIONAL DISHES

and I am fascinated by the range of ingredients and techniques used for the casseroles. Carme Camós, a mother of three and grandmother of one, adds cognac to the broth for her darkly rich *vedella amb bolets* (veal with mushrooms). Rosa Maria Contreras, who is contributing to the dinner for the third time, leaves the tomatoes out of the *sofregit* for her *bacallà amb panses* (salt cod with raisins). Rosa Valls, formerly a cook at the local elementary school, adds pine nuts, toasted bread, and her own, homegrown saffron to the *picada* for her *suquet de peix* (fish stew).

Of all the cooks I meet, perhaps none is quite so opinionated as Carmen Barrio Perez. It is sweltering in her tiny apartment kitchen when I stop by, and the petite 77-year-old is holding forth with the firepower of a machine gun. She rattles off cooking tips as she prepares her *mandonguilles amb sípia i gambes* (meatballs with squid and shrimp): "The meatballs must be made of a mix of ground pork and veal, and two—no more, no less—slices of bread soaked in milk." "You should rub your hands with vinegar before rolling the meatballs so that the meat won't burn." "The shrimp must be laid on top, because they look nicer there, but only after you make it *xup-xup*." And on it goes. Finally, she shoos me out of the kitchen so that she can get her hair done for tonight's party.

THE SHINY WOODEN floors of the pavilion are covered by big, flower-bedecked tables, which

the men of the town set up this morning. Later they reappear, dropping off their wives' casseroles in a side room, where the dishes are to be reheated, 25 at a time, on butane stoves. Though the pride they take in their spouses' cooking is evident in the way that each man unveils the casserole he is carrying, no one is prouder of the women's accomplishments than the women

themselves. For Maria Teresa Sasanedas, one of the event's organizers, joining the collective was the best thing she's ever done. "At home, no one ever thanks you for cooking," she says, "but you make something here, and everyone applauds." Her comments remind me of an observation that Xicu made earlier. "Before we started, these women were convinced that cooking was an

RECIPE

Pollastre amb Salsafins

(Chicken with Salsify)

SERVES 6

To learn more about salsify, a root vegetable used in this dish (facing page), see page 95.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3 1/2 cups chicken stock, preferably homemade | 1 4-lb. chicken, cut into 12 pieces |
| 2 tbsp. flat-leaf parsley leaves | Freshly ground black pepper, to taste |
| 24 whole blanched almonds, toasted | 2 oz. salt pork, cut into small pieces |
| 4 cloves garlic | 1 large yellow onion, grated |
| Kosher salt, to taste | 3 ripe medium tomatoes, halved, seeded, flesh grated, peels discarded |
| 2 lbs. salsify, peeled, cut lengthwise into thirds, and placed in acidulated water (see page 95) | 1 tsp. sugar |
| 2 tbsp. plus 1 cup olive oil (preferably Spanish; see page 100) | 1 cup flour |

1. Purée 1/2 cup stock, parsley, almonds, and garlic in a blender to make a seasoning paste called a *picada* and set aside.

2. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add salsify and simmer, partially covered, until just tender, about 30 minutes. (Depending on the age and size of the salsify, it may take longer to cook.) Drain and pat dry. Meanwhile, heat 2 tbsp. oil in a large deep skillet over medium-high heat. Working in two batches, season chicken with salt and pepper and cook, turning occasionally, until deep golden brown all over, 8–10 minutes per batch. Transfer chicken to a large plate as done. Cover and refrigerate. Reduce heat to medium, add salt pork, and cook until crisp, 6–8 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, discard salt pork, leaving fat in skillet. Increase heat to medium-high, add onions, and cook until golden brown, 8–10 minutes. Add tomatoes and sugar, reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, partially covered, until thick and rich, about 1 hour.

3. Meanwhile, heat remaining oil in a large deep skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches, dredge salsify in flour, shake off excess, and fry, turning occasionally, until golden brown, 6–7 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel-lined sheet tray as done. Season with salt and set aside.

4. Whisk remaining stock into tomato mixture. Add reserved chicken; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, until chicken is tender and cooked through, about 20 minutes. Gently stir in *picada*, salsify, and salt and pepper. Cook until salsify is soft, 12–15 minutes more.





COOKS OF SILS

“BEFORE WE STARTED THE GROUP, THESE WOMEN WERE CONVINCED THAT COOKING WAS AN OBLIGATION,” SAYS FRANCISCO ANORO. “WE’VE SHOWN THEM THAT IT’S MORE LIKE AN ART”

RECIPE

Truita de Xampinyons

(Mushroom and Potato Frittata)

SERVES 6

A Spanish tortilla is similar to an Italian frittata. The Cooks of Sils make many different tortillas, including this classic variation, which includes mushrooms and potatoes.

- 1/2 cup plus 2 tbsp. olive oil (preferably Spanish; see page 100)
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 large russet potato (about 3/4 lb.), peeled and thinly sliced crosswise
- 1 medium yellow onion, thinly sliced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 lb. cremini mushrooms, thickly sliced
- 1/4 lb. oyster mushrooms, roughly chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley leaves
- 6 eggs, beaten

1. Heat 1/2 cup oil in a 10" nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add garlic, potatoes, onions, and salt and pepper; cook, stirring, until softened, 13–15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer potato mixture to a bowl, leaving oil in skillet. Increase heat to medium-high and add mushrooms and salt and pepper; cook until softened, 5–6 minutes. Transfer mushrooms to the potato mixture; let cool. Set skillet aside.

2. Combine parsley, eggs, and salt and pepper in a large bowl. Add cooled onion-mushroom mixture; stir. Set aside for 10 minutes. Heat 1 tbsp. oil in reserved skillet over medium heat. Add egg mixture; cook, shaking skillet occasionally, until bottom is deep golden brown (peek carefully, using a spatula) and center is somewhat set, 6–8 minutes. Place an upside-down plate over skillet; invert tortilla onto plate. Return skillet to heat; add remaining oil. Slide tortilla into skillet, cooked side up, and cook, shaking occasionally, until deep golden brown and just cooked through, 3–4 minutes more. Slide tortilla onto a plate. Serve at room temperature, cut into wedges.



COOKS OF SILS

obligation," he said. "We've shown them that it's more like an art."

When next I see Barrio Perez, she has traded her apron for an elegant floral dress and a new coiffure. She bats her fan impatiently, waiting for the guests to be allowed in and for her moment of glory to arrive. Xicu runs around managing crises—there are no burners left for warming the appetizers; the waiters are short a few serving spoons—but at 9:30 P.M. the doors are opened. Xicu moves to the stage to make

a speech while everyone devours plates of appetizers: tortillas (a frittata-like dish) and thin slices of cured duck. (In addition to a casserole, each woman is responsible for bringing either a tortilla or a coca, a sponge cake-like dessert.) When the time comes for the distribution of the cassoles to the tables—each table receives two different ones, and none of the guests know what they're going to get—everyone stops talking. This is serious stuff. "I hope we get the pigs' feet with snails," whispers Roser Alabert, a friend of Pol's, who is seated near me. "I hope we don't," I whisper to no one.

Alabert's luck is better than mine. I taste a snail but then concentrate on our table's other dish, *pollastre amb gambes* (chicken with shrimp), whose complex flavor features a hint of sweetness from the addition of sherry and chocolate. Within minutes, poachers from other tables are staking out our casserole. "I'll trade you some duck with mushrooms for a

pig's foot," says one man. "Done," I say and quickly tuck into a tender leg, redolent with the earthy notes of porcini mushrooms.

All evening, there is talk around the gymnasium of what will come next for the Cooks of Sils. Xicu would like to see the city open a year-round culinary center, a plan that meets with murmurs of approval among the collective's members at Xicu's table. In the face of Spain's modern gastronomy movement, the women seem more committed than ever to their mission of preserving traditional Catalan foodways.

When the meal is finished, the Cooks of Sils climb up on the stage and receive a thunderous round of applause. The band strikes up a rumba, and dozens of couples take to the dance floor. Carmen Barrio Perez's husband has stayed at home, so she remains at her table. Still, she can't help swaying to the beat. Her pot, she tells me with visible satisfaction, came back completely clean—just as it always does. "Next year," she confides, leaning toward me, "I'm making rabbit."

THE PANTRY, page 100: Sources for Spanish olive oil and *salsify*.



Clockwise from top left: mushroom and potato frittata; the men of Sils having breakfast after setting up the pavilion; unticketed guests; attendee Remei Ribas (right) and a friend take a twirl.



THE GUIDE

SILS, SPAIN

COUNTRY CODE: 34

Dinner for two with drinks, tax, and tip:

EXPENSIVE Over \$100

MODERATE \$30–\$60

WHERE TO STAY

HOTEL MASFERRER *Gualba* (938/48-77-05; www.hotelfanferrer.com). Rates: \$165. This inn, located along an unpaved, unnamed road about 30 minutes from town, occupies a beautifully renovated country house. The stone-walled rooms are minimalist but elegant, and the hotel's restaurant makes the most of local produce.

RIGAT PARK & SPA HOTEL *avenida América 1, playa de Fenals, Lloret de Mar* (972/36-52-00; www.rigat.com). Rates: \$405. This upscale hotel, in a coastal town about 20 minutes from Sils, has tastefully austere rooms and gardens overlooking the Mediterranean.

WHERE TO EAT

CAN FABES *Sant Joan 6, Sant Celoni* (938/672-851; www.canfabes.com). Expensive. With a rustic but refined decor and a menu that features delicious dishes like lacquered baby goat and a cold soup made from local *ganxet* beans and smoked cod eggs, chef Santi Santamaria's restaurant, 30 minutes south of Sils, continues to deserve its three Michelin stars.

RESTAURANTE DE LA GRANOTA *carretera N-II, km 695, Sils* (972/853-044). Moderate. The menu at this cozy restaurant, housed in an old *masia* (country house), leans toward tender roast meats in the winter and grilled ones, including crisply charred baby lamb chops, in the summer, when a delightful outdoor terrace is open.

WHAT TO DO

COOKS OF SILS ANNUAL DINNER *Municipal Pavilion, Sils, July 12, 2008* (cuinasils@sils.es). Now in its 15th year, this event has become the hottest ticket in town. Next July, more than 600 attendees will taste the cassoles and other dishes made by the Cooks of Sils, the town's elder stateswomen of Catalan cuisine, and cap the evening with dancing.



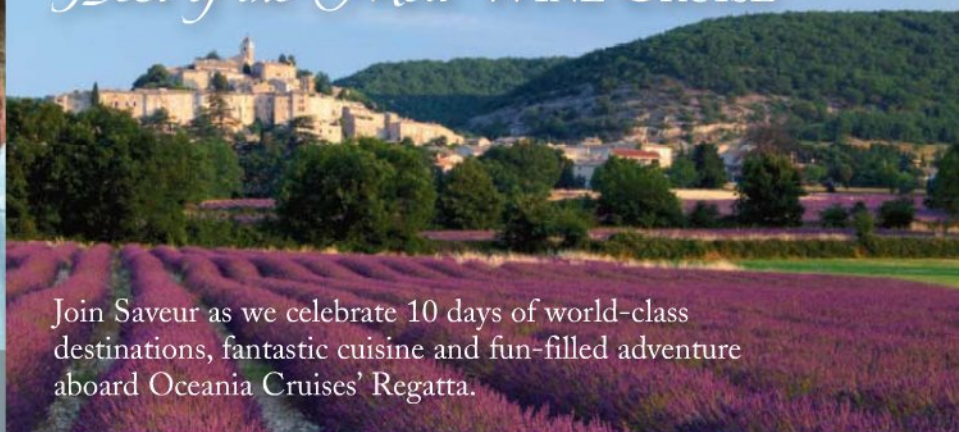
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IN THE SAVEUR

KITCHEN

Discoveries, Tales, and Techniques from Our Favorite Room in the House » Edited by Todd Coleman

Second Acts

TO US, A LEFTOVER holiday fowl is a culinary call to arms, awakening our creativity in the kitchen. Here are three easy post-feast dishes that make great use of each part of the bird.

The monte cristo sandwich could be considered the distant American cousin of the croque monsieur; it's an excellent upgrade from the typical dry turkey-breast sandwich. Layer a few slices of turkey breast **A** and swiss cheese between 3 slices of buttered white bread. Dip the sandwich in a mixture of beaten egg and milk; fry in butter until crisp and golden brown.

The leftover dark meat from a turkey's thigh **B** and drumstick **C** makes a great addition to the paprika-spiked Hungarian stew called paprikás; we got the idea from *Michael Field's Culinary Classics and Improvisations* (Knopf, 1967). Sauté 1 chopped onion in 4 tbsp. butter in a skillet over low heat. Add 1/2 cored, seeded, and sliced green bell pepper; soften. Stir in 1 tbsp. flour and 1 tbsp. hot paprika; whisk in 1 1/2 cups chicken broth. Bring to a boil while whisking; lower heat and add 1/8 tsp. each sugar and salt; simmer briefly. Beat an egg yolk with 1/2 cup sour cream; whisk into sauce. Fold in 2 cups diced thigh or drumstick meat. Add a little lemon juice; sprinkle with chopped dill.

The dark, flavorful meat from the wings **D** makes for a very good hash. Fry some chopped onions and peppers in a heavy pan with a lot of butter. Add some cut-up boiled potatoes, chopped turkey, and a few dashes of worcestershire and hot sauce. Fry until well browned. Finish with a little cream. Serve with ketchup and a bottle of beer. —Todd Coleman

KITCHEN

Salt of the Earth

KOSHER SALT is an indispensable ingredient in the SAVEUR test kitchen; it finds its way into virtually every dish we make (and it's a particularly important player in the crisp apple-scented roast turkey on page 71). Why is kosher salt a cook's best friend? For one thing, it simply tastes better than table salt, delivering a brighter and more complex flavor. For another, kosher salt dissolves faster than table salt and adheres better to the surface of foods, so it's de rigueur for seasoning juicy steaks and chops. Also, its large, coarse particles, which can be up to ten times bigger than table salt's cube-shaped grains, make kosher salt easier to work with when you're seasoning by hand. (If you're using a measuring spoon or cup, note that kosher salt measures differently by volume; when you're using a recipe that calls for table salt, a good rule of thumb is to double the specified amount.) Last but hardly least, kosher salt is inexpensive and widely available in most grocery stores.

The appeal of kosher salt (which takes its name from the fact that it's used in traditional Jewish meat-preservation techniques) lies partly in its purity: you'll usually find nothing but plain sodium chloride in the box and none of the additives found in table salt (those include anticaking agents and iodine, as well as dextrose, which is used to mask iodine's chemical taste). Equally important is kosher salt's texture, which varies from brand to brand. Most kosher salt is made from a brine solution of natural salt deposits that is evaporated in temperature-controlled vats. Some manufacturers use closed vats, which produce fine salt particles that are transferred to a compacting machine and turned into flakes. Other companies let the brine solution evaporate in open pans, which yields hollow, pyramid-shaped crystals. Different shapes translate into different properties in the kitchen, as the tasting notes at right demonstrate. —Liz Pearson



DAVID'S Fresh and briny tasting, these jagged-edged flakes vary in size and have a pleasing crunch. Sprinkle over finished dishes. (See page 100 for a source.)



DIAMOND CRYSTAL The taste of these smallish crystals is concentrated but well rounded, with a savory bite. The perfect all-purpose choice.



MORTON This is the most widely sold kosher salt in the U.S. The hard, uniform crystals lack the complexity we found in other brands and leave a slight chemical aftertaste.

KITCHEN



Rarefied Root

Salsify is a vegetable with an air of mystery. In fact, it's two vegetables: white salsify (*Tragopogon porrifolius*, above), a pale, crooked root covered in wispy filaments that's native to southern Europe, and black salsify (*Scorzonera hispanica*), a longer, straighter, and dark brown tuber that grows as far east as Siberia. Both have a delicate, vaguely mineral flavor reminiscent of artichoke hearts' or, some say, oysters'. In fact, white salsify is often known as oyster plant. That's the type called for in Catalan home cook Maria Pol's recipe for chicken and salsify casserole (page 88), but we recommend using whichever variety you can lay your hands on, as salsify is something of a rarity in U.S. markets. It hasn't always been so. Thomas Jefferson grew salsify in his garden, and it was on the menu at New York's legendary Delmonico's restaurant in the 1890s. The ingredient also appears in multiple preparations—including a simple sauté—in the original *Joy of Cooking* (1931). But people stopped cultivating salsify on a wide scale in this country in the mid-20th century, and no one knows why. Truth be told, the vegetable is fussy when compared with sturdier roots; it breaks if pulled from the ground too roughly, and it spoils rapidly. Once salsify is peeled and cut, it must be stored in acidulated water (water with lemon juice added) to prevent discoloration. But a little vigilance invariably pays off. No other root can duplicate salsify's charms: its mildly sweet, nutty flavor, its tenderness, and the dimension it adds to a rich stock or a buttery glaze are incomparable. Its obscurity only enhances its mystique. (See page 100 for a source.) —Beth Kracklauer



In a Dish of Its Own

On Thanksgiving, my family always preferred table-hopping between friends' homes to hosting our own dinner. As a result, I've tried a lot of different kinds of stuffings over the years, including the corn bread, cranberry, sausage, oyster, chestnut, apple, and giblet varieties. But given a choice, I still find the most basic formula—white bread, onions, fresh herbs, and a lot of butter—to be the most satisfying. For me, the bigger question has always been to stuff or not to stuff. Traditionalists tend to argue for the former, pointing to the fact that cooks in both England and France, our two most prominent culinary forebears, have for ages used forcemeat, or heavily spiced ground meat, to season and moisten the fowl from the inside out. But I've found in-the-bird stuffings to be too mushy, so I prefer to bake my bread-based version in a wide casserole, maximizing the amount of surface area exposed to direct heat. The result is a crisper version of the dish. For an even richer texture and flavor, I dot the top of the stuffing with butter before I bake it. The result is a crunchy-soft, savory delight that outshines my turkey every time. —Lily Binns

METHOD

Classic Stuffing

Nutmeg and savory—two seasonings commonly found in 19th-century stuffing recipes—add subtly sweet and herbal notes to this dish. Heat oven to 400°. Grease a 15-cup baking dish with 1 tbsp. butter; set aside. Heat 10 tbsp. butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add 6 finely chopped ribs celery, 2 finely chopped onions, 1 bay leaf, and kosher salt and pepper to taste; cook until golden brown, 18–20 minutes. Add 1 tbsp. finely chopped sage, 2 tsp. finely chopped marjoram, 2 tsp. finely chopped savory, 2 tsp. finely chopped thyme, and 1/2 tsp. grated nutmeg and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Transfer onion mixture to a large bowl. Add 10 cups toasted 1/2" cubed crustless white bread, 1/2 cup finely chopped parsley, and 3 cups chicken stock and season with salt and pepper to taste. Add 2 beaten eggs and mix. Transfer mixture to prepared dish, press down, and dot with 4 tbsp. butter. Cover with foil; bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and continue baking until deep golden brown on top, about 20 minutes more. Serves 6–8.



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Visit www.scharffenberger.com or www.chocolateadventurecontest.com for complete details.



KITCHEN



Cool Britannia, Via Italy

THE ITALIAN KALE KNOWN as cavolo nero (see page 78) is just one of the many fresh, seasonal ingredients that star in the recipes in Rose Gray and Ruth Rogers's seminal River Cafe cookbook series. Like many of my fellow Brits, I learned Italian cooking from the original *River Cafe Cook Book*, which was published in 1995 by Ebury Press and translated for home cooks the rustic Italian dishes served at the famous London restaurant of the same name. The book, with its distinctive blue cover, invited culinary exploration and offered a welcome change from the fussy fare that many upscale British restaurants favored at the time. Eight additional titles followed the first publication, and I've cooked dishes from all of them: the showstopper of a cake called "chocolate nemesis", from the blue book; the zucchini carpaccio, broad bean—and-pecorino, artichoke heart—and-lemon salads from the yellow book (Ebury Press, 1997); and the bruschetta and grouse in red wine from the silver-covered *Italian Easy: Recipes from the London River Cafe* (Clarkson Potter, 2004). In every recipe, the emphasis was on beautiful, fresh foods. Some of them weren't always easy to find, but the patience of Britain's curious home cooks paid off, and soon ingredients highlighted in the books—cavolo nero, bresaola, arborio rice—were showing up on the shelves of Britain's supermarkets, heralding Britain's gastronomic rebirth. —Indrani Sen

KITCHEN

WINE AND DRINK
SUGGESTIONS INSPIRED BY
THE FOODS IN THIS ISSUE

THANKSGIVING PRESENTS a challenge when you're choosing wine, as there's little chance a single selection will complement all the different dishes on the table. Yet, if you settle on a few versatile wines that are neither dainty nor ponderous, you'll be able to satisfy everyone. Because Thanksgiving is our national feast, I've recommended only American wines below.

Many Thanksgiving dishes, like the crisp apple-scented roast turkey on page 71, are marked by fruit flavors that certain white wines echo and enhance. A good Oregon pinot gris displays pear and apple notes, with a hint of honeysuckle in the bouquet. Look for a **2006 from**

Adelsheim Vineyard (\$19) or **Ponzi Vineyards** (\$17).

Roussanne, a grape native to France's Rhône Valley, yields fairly rich wines also marked by autumnal fruit flavors. **Zaca Mesa Winery & Vineyards 2005** (\$25), from

California, is a standout.

Dishes like the Coca-Cola-glazed country ham on page 47 and the yams with ginger on page 66 taste sweet as well as savory, so red wines with a ripe character will work especially well. Many West Coast pinot noirs match that profile, though a lot of those seem aggressively candied these days. Sumptuous, silky **Calera Mt. Harlan Cuvée 2005** (\$30) and **Morgan Winery "Twelve Clones" 2005** (\$30), both from California, don't have that problem.

Rhône-style blends can also offer an attractively soft texture, often with a peppery edge, that will pair well with a turkey served with the classic stuffing on page 95. **Beckmen Vineyards "Cuvée le Bec" 2005** (\$16), from California, and **Chateau Ste. Michelle "Orphelin" 2004** (\$30), from Washington, are fine choices.

Finally, with desserts like the cardamom-butter milk pie on page 74, look for a sweet wine that feels crisp rather than cloying. **Anthony Road Wine Company "Sweet Dream" 2005** (\$17 for a half bottle), from upstate New York and made with vigneoles grapes, is just that. (See page 100 for sources.)

—Paul Lukacs, Wine Editor



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THE PANTRY

A Guide to Resources

*In producing the stories for this issue,
we discovered food products and
kitchenware too good to keep to ourselves.
Please feel free to raid our pantry!*

BY LIZ PEARSON

Fare

Order Barred Plymouth Rock and Dark Cornish heritage-breed **chickens** from Heritage Foods USA (212/980-6603; www.heritagefoodsusa.com). The price and availability vary, so contact the company directly for details. To learn more about the American Livestock Breeds Conservancy, visit www.albc-usa.org. LeNell's (877/948-8888; www.lenells.com) sells many of the **rye whiskeys** mentioned in our tasting notes.

Lives

Order Herb and Kathy Eckhouse's whole **prosciutto** Americano (\$20.95 per pound) directly from La Quercia Artisan Cured Meats (515/981-1625; www.laquercia.us). Their sliced prosciutto Americano and other cured pork products are available at specialty food stores or via mail order. Our favorite item is the La Quercia Classic Cook's Package (\$64.00), with a sampling of guanciale, prosciutto Americano, and pancetta Americana.

Kitchenwise

Nikki Silva and Davia Nelson, also known as the Kitchen Sisters, are the producers of the radio series *Hidden Kitchens*, which airs on National Public Radio's *Morning Edition*. For details, visit www.kitchensisters.org.

Splendid Table

For information about *The Splendid Table*, Lynne Rossetto Kasper and Sally Swift's national radio show produced by American Public Media, visit <http://splendidtable.publicradio.org>. On the website, you'll find

details on when the show airs in your neck of the woods, as well as podcasts and transcripts of past shows. Make sure to catch *The Splendid Table*'s live radio show, "Turkey Confidential", which airs on Thanksgiving Day. To make the crisp apple-scented roast turkey with cider-calvados gravy, order ground **ancho chile** (\$3.39 for a 2.4-ounce jar) from Penzey's Spices (800/741-7787; www.penzey.com). Sur La Table (800/243-0852; www.surlatable.com) sells the large brining bag (\$9.95) you'll need for making the same dish.

Cooks of Sils

Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-0151; www.melissas.com) sells **salsify** (the price varies) for making the chicken with salsify. To make the meatballs with squid and shrimp, chicken with salsify, and mushroom and potato frittata, order Spanish **olive oil** (\$54.95 for a 3-liter can) from La Tienda (800/710-4304; www.tienda.com).

West Virginia Thanksgiving

Order a delectable whole 15- to 17-lb. bone-in **country ham** (\$3.79 per pound) from Calhoun's (877/825-8319; www.calhounhams.com) for making the Coca-Cola-glazed country ham.

Udon

Your local Asian market will likely carry many brands of dried and semifresh udon, as well as the udon **flour** you'll need for homemade udon. Alternatively, contact Maruwa.com (510/528-5210; www.maruwa.com) to order many of the brands of udon featured in our glossary. Maruwa.com also carries **seven-spice blend** (\$2.39 for a .63-ounce bottle; ask for "shichimi togarashi") for making the cold udon, as well as the dried **anchovies** (\$4.99 for a 6-ounce bag; ask for "iriko"), dried **seaweed** (\$4.19 for a 2.5-ounce package; ask for "kombu"), dried **bonito flakes** (\$5.49 for a 3.5-ounce bag; ask for "dried shaved bonito"), and toasted **sesame seeds** (\$2.49 for a 3-ounce bag; ask for "iri goma") for making udon with dashi, and crisp **tempura flakes** (\$1.99 for a 2.4-

ounce bag; ask for "tenkasu") for making udon with soft-boiled-egg tempura.

Cavolo Nero

Look for **cavolo nero** at your local farmers' market, or order some (the price varies) from Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-0151; www.melissas.com) for making the cavolo nero salad with pecorino rossellino, cavolo nero and borlotti bean soup, braised cavolo nero, farfalle with cavolo nero pesto, and cavolo nero and prosciutto bruschetta. Dean & DeLuca (212/226-6800) sells the Frantoia extra-virgin **olive oil** (\$32.00 for a 33.8-ounce bottle) you'll need for making cavolo nero salad. For that same dish, you'll also need **pecorino rossellino**; find it at your local cheese shop, or order some from Murray's Cheese (212/243-3289; www.murrayscheese.com), which carries it on occasion (the price varies).

Kitchen

Melissa's/World Variety Produce (800/588-0151; www.melissas.com) sells **salsify** (the price varies). David's (609/654-7901; www.davidskosher.com) sells its **kosher salt** directly to consumers; contact the company for details. For the **wines** listed in "What to Pour", contact the following: Adelsheim Vineyard (503/538-3652; www.adelsheim.com) for the Adelsheim pinot gris, Ponzi Vineyards (503/628-1227; www.ponziwines.com) for the Ponzi pinot gris, Zaca Mesa Winery & Vineyards (805/688-9339; www.zacamesa.com) for the Zaca Mesa roussanne, Calera (831/637-9170; www.calerawine.com) for the Calera Mt. Harlan Cuvée, Morgan Winery (831/751-7777; www.morganwinery.com) for the Morgan "Twelve Clones", Beckmen Vineyards (805/688-8664; www.beckmenvineyards.com) for the Beckmen "Cuvée le Bec", Chateau Ste. Michelle Winery (800/866-6276; www.ste-michelle.com) for the Chateau Ste. Michelle "Orphelin", and Anthony Road Wine Company (800/559-2182; www.anthonysroadwine.com) for the Anthony Road "Sweet Dream".

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Coffee, the New Wine

BY MILES SMALL

A Panamanian green (unroasted) coffee, Panama Chiriqui Geisha Esmeralda Special La Hacienda Esmeralda 2006–7, was recently sold at auction for \$130 per pound. Valued for their extraordinary diversity, nuance, and complexity, specialty coffees from around the

is called “terroir” in the world of wine. The art of preparing coffees of the highest quality is based in the tree, the soil, the sky, and the farmer’s dedication to his craft.

Coffee beans are actually seeds contained in a small fruit called a cherry. Premium coffee cherries become fully ripe throughout the growing season, so the farmer must handpick only the bright red cherries at exactly the correct moment. Working a coffee finca, or farm, is truly a family affair, with all picking and sorting the valuable beans.

The next vital step in the processing of the bean is the wet and dry mills where the precious beans are removed from the surrounding fruit. The beans are then carefully dried by hand over several days so that 88 percent of the moisture is removed. A common sight in coffee lands is the large concrete “patios” where workers turn the drying beans over and over to ensure consistent, even drying. Beans poorly dried and handled are reduced in quality and value.



The microclimate of the coffee estate mirrors the concept of wine “terroir.” Right: Beans drying under a canopy.

globe are being routinely sold to discriminating connoisseurs for \$25 to \$50 a pound. Coffee is the new wine.

Coffee has joined wine in the pantheon of noble beverages. Specialty coffee—that rich, alluring brew from the far-flung corners of the world, grown with care by dignified and courageous small farmers, roasted to perfection by consummate professionals, and prepared by trained baristas—bears no resemblance to the insipid, boiled, brown, acrid water being served in most restaurants.

Consider that in order for a coffee to be considered “specialty” it must be handpicked at optimal ripeness from arabica trees growing above 1,000 meters altitude and only within a band between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. The best coffees grow in rich, volcanic soil within narrow moisture and temperature ranges. Premium coffee requires premium care.

All coffee comes from the same two species of plant, *Coffea arabica* and *Coffea canephora* (*robusta*). In the United States,

arabicas are used almost exclusively for premium coffee.

If all coffee originates from only two distinct sources, why does it taste so remarkably different depending upon where it is grown? Rich, full-bodied Costa Rican, lush with tones of Bing cherry and chocolate, is completely different from earthy, blueberry-fruit premium Yergacheffe from Ethiopia. Just like grapes, coffee plants produce remarkably different coffees depending upon environmental factors. This is very similar to what

Country of Origin | Panama

State or Province | Chiriqui

Species | *Coffea arabica*

Type | Geisha

Name Esmeralda | Special

Producer | La Hacienda Esmeralda

Harvest Cycle | 2006–7



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{ ALL COFFEE COMES FROM THE SAME TWO PLANTS, COFFEA ARABICA AND COFFEA CANEPHORA (ROBUSTA). IN THE U.S., ARABICAS ARE USED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY FOR PREMIUM COFFEE. }

ambassador of Costa Rican coffee to the world. To people from tourists to presidents, Café Britt and Costa Rican coffee have become synonymous.

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MILES SMALL is the editor-in-chief of *CoffeeTalk*, a major coffee trade publication based in Vashon, Washington.

more about this extraordinary company.

Scientists have identified over 800 compounds in roasted coffee that contribute to taste, more than can be found in a fine red wine. An understanding of the roast requirements and the nuances of beans makes the difference between a bitter, burnt brew and sweet ambrosia. Batdorf & Bronson Coffee Roasters is widely regarded as a leader in the specialty coffee industry for its attention to quality, sustainability, and freshness. It has been roasting coffee in Olympia, Washington, since 1986, and Atlanta, Georgia, since 1994, and its coffee buyers and roasters are known to be among the nation's finest. Its Web site, www.DancingGoats.com, is an invaluable resource for information about coffees.

While caffeine provides an



Hand-sorting beans—a labor-intensive process. Right: African beans ready for wholesale.



incentive for most coffee lovers, others prefer their stimulation to come from taste without caffeine, making the decaffeination process a crucial element. No discussion of coffee can be complete without a mention of SWISS

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For the ultimate coffee connoisseur, the ability to try one's hand at home roasting is the next step. Until now, good sources for unroasted coffee and reasonably priced equipment were hard to find. The Internet has brought the art of specialty coffee collecting, roasting, and

tures the art of espresso.

Recognizing that coffee is essential to a full culinary experience, specialty coffee producers have found an excited audience in gourmet specialty food suppliers such as Sun-Rich. An international purveyor of gourmet foods, Sun-Rich travels the globe to secure the finest foods the world has to offer, while promoting the well-being of

{ COFFEE BEANS ARE ACTUALLY SEEDS CONTAINED IN A SMALL FRUIT CALLED A CHERRY. PREMIUM COFFEE CHERRIES BECOME FULLY RIPE THROUGHOUT THE GROWING SEASON, SO THE FARMER MUST HANDPICK ONLY THE BRIGHT RED CHERRIES AT EXACTLY THE CORRECT MOMENT. }

savoring direct to the home.

Green (unroasted) coffee can be roasted to perfection more than a year after being harvested. You can create your own "house blend," from the classic lighter city roast to the darkest French roast. Generally considered the best home roaster available, the Gene Café Roaster puts you in total control. With this superior machine you and your guests will enjoy the best and freshest cup of coffee you have ever tasted. For more information on the Gene Café Roaster, visit www.freshbeansinc.com.

Absolutely crucial in making the "perfect cup" is a high-quality brewer. Now you can have the full artisanal coffee-house experience and test your "inner barista" right in your own kitchen with a DeLonghi espresso machine. These brewers are beautifully designed to produce perfect espresso, latte, and cappuccino, cup after cup, every time. In the tradition of the finest machines with a modern twist, DeLonghi cap-

the people working to create these delicacies. Sun-Rich offers some of the finest and rarest coffees from around the world—Sumatra, Kenya, New Guinea, Nicaragua, Nepal, and Hawaii. Grown on the foothills of the Himalayan Mountain range, its Nepalese Grande Himalayan coffee is one of the rarest coffees in the world. Find out more at www.sunrichgourmet.com.

Coffee is the new wine. Discover the delights of an artisanal roaster, whose expertise will guide you through a world of subtle flavor, or pick up a pound of green (unroasted) estate-grown beans and begin a self-guided journey to the ultimate coffee taste by roasting in your own home.

The diversity and nuance, the history and skill, the sublime experience, and the startling new tastes are waiting for you to explore. Just like wine, a great cup of coffee with the right atmosphere and food pairing can be a transcendental experience. ■



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Cooking with Class
Granger, IN
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The Elephant Walk
Cambridge, MA
617/492-6900

Le Chat Gourmet
Eaton Rapids, MI
517/663-7322

Kitchen Window
Minneapolis, MN
612/824-4417

A Southern Season
Chapel Hill, NC
877/929-7133

Impressive Chef
Nashua, NH
603/891-3520

The Cooking Company In The Kitchen At Cornerstone
Moorestown, NJ
856/489-1682

Miette Culinary Studio
New York, NY
212/460-9322

The Loretta Paganini School of Cooking
Chesterland, OH
440/729-1110

Cooks' Wares
Cincinnati, OH
513/489-6400

Laurel Run Cooking School
Vermillion, OH
440/984-LRCS

Allyson's of Ashland
Ashland, OR
541/482-2884

Linkville Kitchen & Candy Shoppe
Klamath Falls, OR
541/850-8334

Sagra Cooking
Eaton, PA
610/721-9608

The Kitchen Workshop
Paoli, PA
610/993-2665

Albertson's Cooking School
Wynnewood, PA
610/649-2939

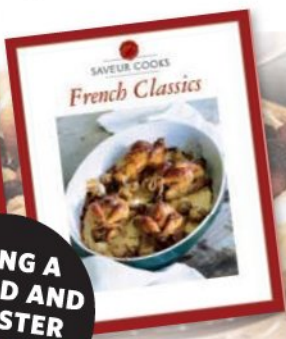
Charleston Cooks!
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843/722-1212

The Main Course
Plano, TX
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902 All in Cruises Category

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- 11 Wachovia Wealth Management**
Specializing in investment management, financial planning, banking and credit, and trust and insurance services tailored to your individual needs.

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- 12 DeLonghi**
The elegant DeLonghi Gran Dama delivers authentic espresso, cappuccino, latte, and Italian macchiato with the simple touch of a button.
- 13 Lacanche Ranges**
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The complete Viking kitchen presents the pinnacle of performance.
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- 16 Villas at Royal Lahaina**
Villas at Royal Lahaina, an exclusive, low-density collection of 126 extraordinary residences set on Ka'anapali Beach. Truly a community unlike any other.

SPECIALTY FOODS

- 17 Alaska Seafood**
Learn more about sustainably harvested wild Alaska seafood, including species information, recipes, and cooking tips. Be sure to ask for Alaska!
- 18 Avanti Savoia**
Avanti Savoia strives to bring you the very finest gourmet products from Italy, "The Best of the Best".
- 19 Bunn Family Gourmet**
Five generations later, the Bunn family continues to offer products with the promise "Quality Since 1840". Be assured, every delicious product available at Bunn Family Gourmet lives up to that standard!
- 20 Café Britt Gourmet Coffee**
Costa Rica's finest coffees, plantation direct since 1985. Specialty regional blends, luxurious chocolate coffee beans, coffee truffles, unique gourmet gifts, and more.
- 21 Chef Paul Prudhomme's Magic Seasoning Blends®**
Chef Paul Prudhomme's Magic Seasoning Blends® are distributed in all 50 states and in more than 30 other countries around the world. His blends are widely popular with both home cooks and professional chefs.
- 22 Forever Cheese**
Forever Cheese sources unique and highest-quality cheeses and specialty foods from Italy, Spain, and Portugal.
- 23 Hancock Gourmet Lobster**
Gourmet lobster and seafood specialties from Cundy's Harbor, Maine.
- 24 Hubbard Peanut Company**
For over 50 years, Hubbard Peanut Company has been cooking super extra-large, Virginia-type peanuts. All natural ingredients. Gift sets available.
- 25 Ivory King**
Fresh and frozen seafood from Alaska and the Pacific Northwest: king and dungeness crab, king salmon, Pacific scallops, Alaskan spot shrimp, razor clams, halibut, and other seafoods on request. And, of course, our famous Ivory King salmon!
- 26 Kerrygold Cheese and Butter Imported from Ireland**
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- 27 Millie's Pierogi**
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- 28 Scharffen Berger**
Scharffen Berger sources the world's rarest cacao beans and follows a meticulous artisan manufacturing process to create its flavorful chocolates.
- 29 Scottish Smoked Salmon Company**
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- 30 Stello Foods**
At Stello Foods, Inc., we specialize in making specialty food products. We take great pride in every product we manufacture, whether it be our own Rosie's line or a specialty item that you would like us to offer.
- 31 Tortuga Rum Cake Company**
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910 All in Specialty Foods Category

TRAVEL DESTINATIONS

- 32 Caravan Tours**
Caravan Tours provides a great vacation at an affordable price. Our quality tours are fully escorted with sightseeing, professional tour directors, and great itineraries.
- 33 Mediterranean Kitchens Cooking Vacations**
Mediterranean Kitchens Cooking Vacations offers an assortment of hands-on cooking programs throughout the Mediterranean region. Each of our destinations—Israel, Sicily, and Morocco—has been selected for its exciting combination of fine food and wine and warm and welcoming hosts and staff.
- 34 Rock Springs Guest Ranch**
Bringing horses and people together to create memories of a lifetime, a traditional dude ranch in Bend, Oregon.
- 35 Travel Oregon**
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- 36 Under the Italian Sun**
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- 912 All in Travel Destinations Category**

WINE & SPIRITS

- 37 Bedford Wine Trail**
Get passionate over Bedford's wineries, dotting the slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the shores of Smith Mountain Lake.
- 38 California Wine Wafers**
This fantastic dessert is made in three flavors to accompany a glass of fine white wine, red wine, or champagne.
- 39 Chateau Ste. Michelle**
Chateau Ste. Michelle pioneered vinifera grape growing in Washington and is recognized for chardonnay, cabernet, and riesling. The winery owns 3,400 acres of vineyards in the Columbia Valley, including the acclaimed Canoe Ridge Estate and Cold Creek vineyards.
- 40 Geerlings & Wade**
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- 41 Gold Medal Wine Club**
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- 42 Oppenheimer Wine Club Guide**
Oppenheimer Wine Club Guide is the ultimate guide to critically acclaimed wineries that ship direct to discerning wine lovers in California, New York, and Florida. Includes reviews by club members and contact information on each club.
- 43 Oregon Pinot Noir Club**
The Oregon Pinot Noir Club provides Oregon's best pinot noirs to wine lovers around the country and around the world.
- 44 Pacific Wine Club**
Let us guide you and your friends to the best boutique wines at the best prices through Pacific Wine Club membership.
- 45 St. Supéry Vineyards & Winery**
A family-owned Napa Valley estate winery specializing in sauvignon blanc and cabernet sauvignon.
- 46 Winesceptre® Wine Cooling System**
The Winesceptre is the latest innovation in wine accessories and, with five designs available, makes the perfect gift for the wine lover.
- 913 All in Wine & Spirits Category**

Wrinkle Insurance

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ANTI-AGING BREAKTHROUGH

Years of clinical research in the field of scar-less healing and skin tissue regeneration has revolutionized the cosmetic industry and the way we make our skin youthful. The anti-aging breakthrough by microbiologist Dr. Burt Ensley involved the discovery of **Tropoelastin**, a molecule that gradually reduces wrinkles and can stop your skin's aging clock. How does it work?

Collagen and elastin are the two principal proteins in human skin. Think of collagen as a kind of rope...strong but very stiff. Elastin acts as a rubber band, firmly pulling these stiff ropes of collagen fiber together.

Thanks to elastin, we enjoy smooth, soft, vibrant skin in our youth. Like elastic, this essential protein permits many of the body's tissues to reclaim their original shape after stretching and contracting. While the body continually produces collagen, it unfortunately ceases elastin production after puberty. With time, the elastin in our bodies breaks down, leaving us with an array of undesirable wrinkles, creases and facial folds.

In his research, Dr. Ensley synthesized Tropoelastin, the precursor of human elastin, and applied it to study subjects in the form of a skin cream. Created by skin cells, Tropoelastin significantly improved their skin texture, elasticity and reduced wrinkles. After years of studying a synthesized source of this breakthrough ingredient, Elastatropin™, the most results-oriented anti-aging cream was developed - **DermaLastyl™**.

DermaLastyl™ with Elastatropin delivers the Tropoelastin to the skin surface where it is absorbed into the epidermis over a 24 hour period to begin replacement of the elastin lost through aging.

BETTER THAN BOTOX® ALTERNATIVES

DermaLastyl is fundamentally different from the countless moisturizers and Better than Botox alternatives such as, Olay, Revitalift and other anti-aging products. These rely heavily on the connection between peptides and collagen. Peptides are said to "reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles by stimulating collagen production in the skin. The peptides in these products are made up of chains of up to 6 amino acids in length.

DermaLastyl™ contains similar collagen stimulating peptides along with Elastatropin™. This unique ingredient has over 600 amino acids - 100 times more than

the other products on the market today. So, not only do you get the amazing benefits of the first-and-only anti-aging product to reverse loose skin and wrinkles, but you get the added benefit of increased collagen production as well. At a cost of over \$2 million per ounce, Elastatropin™ is the most expensive cosmetic ingredient ever made. A two oz. jar of DermaLastyl™ contains enough Elastatropin™ to replace the amount of elastin you lose in four months.

TURN BACK THE CLOCK

DermaLastyl™ contains much more than Elastatropin™. In order to promote overall skin health, Dr. Ensley has added Matrixyl 3000® to promote collagen production, Argireline®, a peptide that relaxes facial muscles and Hyaluronic Acid, the body's own natural moisturizer. DermaLastyl™ also contains an exclusive anti-oxidant,

DermaLastyl vs. Other Anti-Aging Skin Creams

Product	Matrixyl 3000	Argireline	Hyaluronic	Phytosel	Tropoelastin
DermaLastyl®	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Revitalift®	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Olay Total Effects®	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
La Mer®	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO

PhytoSelenium. Scientific studies show that selenium can reduce the incidence of cancers, repair sun damaged skin and prevent the adverse effects of UV exposure, including destruction of elastin in skin. Together, these unique ingredients form the most advanced anti-aging skin care available. DermaLastyl™ provides the natural remedy for wrinkles without costly and time-consuming cosmetic surgery procedures, injections or resurfacing. Apply DermaLastyl™ once a day and you can stop your skin's aging clock. Apply twice a day and you can turn back the clock.

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DermaLastylβ is 100% guaranteed; if you are dissatisfied, simply return the product within 30 days for a full refund. DermaLastyl-β™ Face Cream and DermaLastyl-E™ Intensive Eye Serum are not available in stores.

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—MICHELLE W. COLORADO



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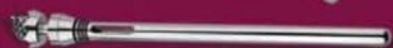
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M O M E N T



TIME 1:30 P.M., August 16, 2007

PLACE New York City

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES OSELAND

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